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## সুকুমার সেনের ইতিহাস চেতনা

সুনন্দন কুমার সেন

কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ

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### ABSTRACT

বিবিধ বিষয় সারা জীবন চর্চা করেছেন সুকুমার সেন। কখনো একটি বিষয় থেমে থাকেননি। এটি তার বৈশিষ্ট্য। ভাষাবিজ্ঞান, সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস, পুরাণ, মিথ, ইতিহাস, ব্যুৎপত্তি, গোয়েন্দা কাহিনী, ভূত, বটতলা, স্থাননাম প্রভৃতি বিভিন্ন বিষয়ে তার আগ্রহ ছিল। এইসব বিষয় নিয়ে লিখেছেনও প্রচুর।

বর্তমান প্রবন্ধে আলোচনা করা হয়েছে তার ইতিহাস সংক্রান্ত বইগুলি নিয়ে এবং তার ইতিহাস চেতনা নিয়ে।

### Introduction

সুকুমার সেনকে কি ইতিহাসকার বলা যেতে পারে? তিনি কি ঐতিহাসিক? এই প্রশ্ন খুবই সংগত। তাঁকে তো আমরা পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিক বলে কোনোদিন চিনি। তবে এ কথা ঠিক যে তাঁর অসংখ্য লেখার মধ্যে আমরা পেয়েছি কোনো না কোনোভাবে ইতিহাসের অন্বেষণ। মানবীবিদ্যার যে যে শাখা বা উপশাখায় তিনি গবেষণা করেছেন বা মৌলিক প্রবন্ধ এবং বই লিখেছেন সেখানেই তাঁর লেখার মধ্যে আমরা পেয়েছি হয় অতীতের কুলুজি সন্ধান নয় কোনো না কোনো বিষয় অতীত থেকে আধুনিক যুগ পর্যন্ত এক ধারাবাহিক ইতিহাসের খোঁজ। এই অন্বেষণের মাধ্যমে তিনি ব্যাপ্ত থেকেছেন আমাদের (দেশ ও জাতির) নষ্টকোষ্টী উদ্ধারে, যে নষ্টকোষ্টীর অভাবের কথা বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র আক্ষেপের সুরে বলেছিলেন<sup>1</sup>। সুকুমার সেনের ইতিহাসের এই অন্বেষণ বিবিধ। কখনো সাহিত্যের ইতিহাসের<sup>2</sup>, কখনো ভাষার ইতিহাসের<sup>3</sup>, কখনও গোয়েন্দা বা ভূতের<sup>4</sup> গল্পের ইতিহাসে অথবা কখনও আবার বটতলার<sup>5</sup> ইতিহাসের। এর পাশাপাশি প্রকৃত ইতিহাস চর্চার মতন বাংলার বিশেষ করে প্রাচীন ও মধ্যযুগের বাংলার রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক, সাংস্কৃতিক ইতিহাসের প্রতি আকৃষ্ট হয়েছিলেন। এই আকর্ষণের ফলস্বরূপ তিনটি গ্রন্থ আমরা পেয়েছি- ‘প্রাচীন বাংলা ও বাঙালী’, ‘মধ্যযুগের বাংলা ও বাঙালী’ ও ‘বঙ্গভূমিকা’। প্রথম দুটি গ্রন্থ আকারে ক্ষুদ্র, বিশ্বভারতীর বিশ্ববিদ্যাসংগ্রহ সিরিজে প্রকাশিত। তৃতীয় গ্রন্থটি প্রায় তিন দশক পরে লেখা।

প্রাচীন ও মধ্যযুগের বঙ্গসংস্কৃতির আলোচনায় সুকুমার সেনের প্রথম গ্রন্থটি হল ‘প্রাচীন বাংলা ও বাঙালী’ (১৩৫০)। এই গ্রন্থটির সময়কাল পঞ্চম থেকে দ্বাদশ শতাব্দী। ক্ষুদ্র এই গ্রন্থটিতে সাধারণ পাঠকের কথা মাথায় রেখে বাঙালি সমাজ জীবনের এগারোটি বিষয় আলোচিত হয়েছে। তাদের মধ্যে আছে ভৌগোলিক বিবরণ, রাজনৈতিক ইতিহাস, ধর্মের ইতিহাস, কাব্যচর্চার ইতিহাস, স্বাস্থ্যচর্চার ইতিহাস,

<sup>1</sup> দ্রষ্টব্য, বিবিধ প্রবন্ধ, বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায়

<sup>2</sup> বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস (পাঁচ খণ্ড), আনন্দ সংস্করণ, (১৯৯১-১৯৯৯)

<sup>3</sup> ভাষার ইতিবৃত্ত, আনন্দ সংস্করণ (১৯৯৩)

<sup>4</sup> গল্পের ভূত (১৯৮২), ক্রাইম কাহিনীর কালক্রান্তি (১৯৮৮)

<sup>5</sup> বটতলার ছাপা ও ছবি, শোভন আনন্দ সংস্করণ (২০০৮)

ভোজনবিলাসের বিবরণ, নারীদের বেশভূষার বিবরণ, নামকরণ ও পদবী। গ্রন্থটির অন্যতম বৈশিষ্ট্য হল, বক্তব্যের প্রমাণ স্বরূপ দেওয়া উদ্ধৃতিগুলি। এই গ্রন্থ রচনার ক্ষেত্রে অনুমানের সাহায্য যে তিনি নিয়েছিলেন, তা তিনি নিজেই স্বীকার করেছেন। প্রসঙ্গত তিনি বলেছিলেন –

“উপযুক্ত প্রমাণের অভাবে এই পরিচয় সর্বাঙ্গীন নয়। তবে কল্পনার সাহায্যে অবান্তর ও অমূলক সম্পূর্ণতা দিয়ে ঐতিহাসিক সত্যকে বিকৃত বা অতথ্যকে তথ্য প্রতিপন্ন করা হয়নি”।

দ্বিতীয় গ্রন্থটি হল ‘মধ্যযুগের বাংলা ও বাঙালী’ (১৩৫২) পনেরোটি ধারাবাহিক অনুচ্ছেদে এটি রচিত, যা মূলত সাহিত্যিক প্রমাণের উপর নির্ভর করে। এই গ্রন্থে তাঁর মূল প্রতিপাদ্য ছিল যে তুর্কি আক্রমণের পরে বাঙালির সমাজ জীবনে কোনো অন্ধকার যুগ দেখা যায়নি। নিম্নবর্ণীয় স্তরে সাম্প্রদায়িকতা ছিল না, ছিল মানবিক বন্ধন। বিদেশি শক্তির আক্রমণের ফলে বঙ্গীয় সংস্কৃতি দুর্বল হয়নি বরং তা আরও পরিপুষ্ট হয়েছে। মনে রাখতে হবে এই গ্রন্থদ্বয় যখন প্রকাশিত হয় তখনও পর্যন্ত নীহাররঞ্জন রায়ের ‘বাঙ্গালীর ইতিহাস’ প্রকাশিত হয়নি। নীহাররঞ্জন রায়ের বইয়ের পরিসর ও ব্যাপ্তি বিশাল। সেই তুলনায় এই বই দুটির পরিসর সীমিত। কিন্তু নীহাররঞ্জন রায়ের গ্রন্থটির আগেই যে সুকুমার সেন যে বাঙালির সামাজিক ইতিহাস রচনায় প্রচেষ্টা হয়েছিলেন তা স্যার যদুনাথ সরকার নীহাররঞ্জন রায়ের ‘বাঙ্গালীর ইতিহাস’ গ্রন্থটির ভূমিকায় বলেছিলেন

“... খুব সংক্ষিপ্তাকারে শ্রীযুক্ত সুকুমার সেন রচিত ‘প্রাচীন বাংলা ও বাঙালী’ (বিশ্ববিদ্যাসংগ্রহ পুস্তিকামালা, ১২ নং) বাঙলা পুস্তিকাটিতে এইরূপ সামাজিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক ইতিহাসের আভাস পাওয়া গিয়েছে। ... কিন্তু তাহাতে আংশিক আলোচনার স্থান মাত্র ছিল, তাহাদের পরিকল্পনাও অন্য প্রকৃতির।”

এই দুটি গ্রন্থের রচনার দীর্ঘ তিরিশ বছর পরে তিনি লিখেছিলেন তাঁর তৃতীয় গ্রন্থ ‘বঙ্গভূমিকা’। গ্রন্থটি প্রকাশিত হয় ১৯৭৪ সালে। মাত্র দুবছর আগেই স্বাধীন দেশরূপে বাংলাদেশের আবির্ভাব হয়েছে। এই ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনা কি তাঁকে উদ্বুদ্ধ করেছিল এই বইটি লিখতে? অনেকেই এমন অনুমান করেছেন<sup>৬</sup>। কিন্তু এই অনুমান সঠিক নয়। দীর্ঘদিন ধরে বাংলা সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস লেখার কাজে ব্যস্ত থাকার সময় বিবিধ পাঠ থেকে তিনি একটু একটু করে সংগ্রহ করেছিলেন বঙ্গদেশের সামাজিক জীবনের তথ্য। দীর্ঘদিন ধরে সংগৃহীত তথ্যগুলি বিশ্লেষণ করে অবশেষে তিনি লেখেন ‘বঙ্গভূমিকা’। প্রথম বই দুটি আকারে খুব ছোটো, তার মধ্যে অসম্পূর্ণতা আছে তা বুঝেই হয়ত পরবর্তীকালে তিনি লিখলেন বঙ্গভূমিকা। আগের বই দুটির মধ্যে রাজনৈতিক ইতিহাস তেমন একটা আলোচনার মধ্যে আসেনি। সেই অভাব কিঞ্চিৎ দূর হল বঙ্গভূমিকাতে। খ্রিস্টপূর্ব তৃতীয় শতাব্দী থেকে সেন বংশের পতন পর্যন্ত বাংলাদেশের রাজনৈতিক ইতিহাস আলোচিত হয়েছে বঙ্গভূমিকায়। এই গ্রন্থে তিনি কিন্তু প্রাচীন লেখমালার যথেষ্ট ব্যবহার করেছিলেন। পাঁচটি অংশে বিভক্ত এই বইটি। তাঁর মধ্যে প্রথম অংশ ‘কালের সোপান’ মূলত রাজনৈতিক ইতিহাস আর বাকি অংশ প্রধানত সামাজিক ইতিহাস যেখানে তিনি আলোচনা করেছেন সাহিত্য, শিল্প, সমাজ, সংসার, ধর্ম, বিদ্যাচর্চা। আবার সাহিত্যিক প্রমাণেরও বিপুল ব্যবহার তিনি ‘বঙ্গভূমিকা’ গ্রন্থে করেছিলেন। শুধু বঙ্গভূমিকাতেই নয় প্রাচীন বাংলা ও বাঙালী, মধ্যযুগের বাংলা ও বাঙালীতেও তিনি প্রভূত সাহিত্যিক প্রমাণেরও ব্যবহার করেছেন। প্রাকৃত-পৈঙ্গল, চর্যাগীতি, পবনদূত, গীতগোবিন্দ, সেকশুভোদয়া, শরণের কাব্য প্রভৃতি গ্রন্থ বা গ্রন্থোল্লেখ থেকে স্থানে স্থানে তুলে দিয়েছেন মূল্যবান শ্লোকগুলি, কাব্যাংশ নিজের বক্তব্যের প্রমাণস্বরূপ।

প্রাচীন ও মধ্যযুগের তথ্যভিত্তিক ইতিহাস রচনার সূত্রপাত বরেন্দ্র অনুসন্ধান সমিতির কিছু ঐতিহাসিকদের মাধ্যমে। পরবর্তীকালে প্রথিতযশা পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিকেরা যেমন রাখালদাস

<sup>৬</sup> পশ্চিমবঙ্গ বাংলা আকাদেমি সংস্করণ (১৯৯৯), সচিবের মন্তব্য

<sup>৭</sup> দ্রষ্টব্য ‘দিনের পরে দিন যে গেল’, আনন্দ সংস্করণ (২০০১)



বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়<sup>৪</sup>, নীহাররঞ্জন রায়, যদুনাথ সরকার<sup>৯</sup>, রমেশচন্দ্র মজুমদার<sup>১০</sup> প্রাচীন ও মধ্যযুগের রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক ইতিহাস নিয়ে বিস্তৃত আলোচনা করেছেন। এই রাজনৈতিক ইতিহাস চর্চা ও রচনা অবশ্যই পাথুরে প্রমাণের উপর নির্ভরশীল। রাজনৈতিক ইতিহাসের পর ধীরে ধীরে আমাদের দেশে ক্রমশ গুরুত্ব পেতে থাকে অর্থনৈতিক ইতিহাস। এই অর্থনৈতিক ইতিহাস রচনাও পাথুরে প্রমাণের উপর নির্ভরশীল। আমাদের দেশে ইতিহাসের একটি সংকীর্ণ সংজ্ঞা আছে<sup>১১</sup>। শুধু তাই নয় ইতিহাস সম্বন্ধে কিছু ভুল ধারণাও আছে। ইতিহাসের সংকীর্ণ সংজ্ঞা মনে করে যে ইতিহাস-চর্চা ও রচনা পাথুরে প্রমাণের উপর নির্ভরশীল। আমাদের দেশের প্রাচীনযুগের ইতিহাসচর্চায় পাথুরে প্রমাণ বলতে আমরা বুঝেছি শিলালিপি, স্তম্ভলিপি, মুদ্রা, ভূমিদানপট প্রভৃতি। আবার মধ্যযুগের ইতিহাস আলোচনায় প্রাধান্য পেয়েছে বিবিধ ফার্সী দলিল দস্তাবেজ অথবা আইন-ই-আকবরীর মতো গ্রন্থ। বঙ্গদেশের ইতিহাস রচনাতেও এইসব সাক্ষ্য, গ্রন্থ ইত্যাদি প্রাধান্য পেয়েছে।

সুকুমার সেন তো পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিক ছিলেন না। তিনি ছিলেন একাধারে ভাষাতাত্ত্বিক আবার তিনিই রচনা করেছেন বাংলা সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস। আমাদের দেশে যে ঘরানার ভাষাতত্ত্ব চর্চার প্রায় শেষ প্রতিভা ছিলেন সুকুমার সেন সেই তুলনামূলক-ঐতিহাসিক ভাষাতত্ত্ব আদর্শ ছিল একধরনের ইতিহাস-সন্ধান। এই ভাষাতত্ত্ব চর্চার সূত্রে তিনি বিবিধ ভাষার সংস্পর্শে এসেছিলেন, বিশেষ করে আমাদের দেশের প্রাচীন ভাষাগুলির; সংস্কৃত, প্রাকৃত, পালি, অবহট্ট প্রভৃতি, যার মধ্যে সংস্কৃততে তার গভীর ব্যুৎপত্তি ছিল। এইসব বিবিধ ভাষার বিপুল সাহিত্যের সংস্পর্শেও তিনি এসেছিলেন। যার ফলস্বরূপ সেইসব রচিত সাহিত্য থেকে তিনি ঐতিহাসিক তথ্য সংগ্রহ করেছিলেন। এই তথ্য আহরণের অনুসন্ধিৎসা তাঁকে ইতিহাসধর্মী আলোচনার দিকে অনুপ্রাণিত করেছিল। যার ফলে সাহিত্যের ইতিহাসের পাশাপাশি তিনি লিখেছিলেন ‘বঙ্গভূমিকা’র মতো গ্রন্থ। বাঙালির সামাজিক বা রাজনৈতিক ইতিহাস রচনার ক্ষেত্রেও তিনি মনে করেছিলেন যে সাহিত্য রচনা শুধুমাত্র পাথুরে প্রমাণের উপর নির্ভর করে না। সাহিত্যের ভিতর থেকেও ইতিহাসের তথ্য মিলতে পারে। তাই তিনি মনে করেছিলেন পাথুরে প্রমাণের পাশাপাশি বাঙালির ইতিহাস রচনার ক্ষেত্রে বিবিধ বৈষ্ণব গ্রন্থ, ইসলামী সাহিত্য, সহজিয়া পুথি, সংস্কৃত পুথি, এদেরও অপরিসীম গুরুত্ব আছে। এখানেই পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিকদের সঙ্গে তাঁর ইতিহাস চেষ্টার মূল তফাৎ। পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিকরা মনে করতেন সাহিত্যিক প্রমাণ সঠিক অর্থে ঠিক পাথুরে প্রমাণ নয়। সেইজন্য তাঁরা সাহিত্যিক প্রমাণের ব্যবহার সম্বন্ধে কিঞ্চিৎ সন্দেহান্বিত ছিলেন। কিন্তু সুকুমার সেন দেখিয়েছেন সাহিত্য থেকেও কীভাবে ঐতিহাসিক সূত্র আহরণ করা সম্ভব। একথা সহজেই অনুমান করা যায় যে ‘বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস’ রচনা করতে গিয়ে নিশ্চয় তাঁর মনে হয়েছিল যে মধ্যযুগের বিপুল সাহিত্য সম্ভারের সঙ্গে সম্যক পরিচয় না থাকলে বঙ্গদেশে ইতিহাস চর্চায় পরিপূর্ণ হবে না। পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিকদের সাহিত্যিক প্রমাণ সম্বন্ধে একসময় যে মানসিক সংকীর্ণতা ছিল তা হয়তো অনেকাংশেই দূর করতে সক্ষম হয়েছিলেন সুকুমার সেনের মতন অন্যান্য বাংলা সাহিত্যের রচয়িতারা। বঙ্গদেশের রাজনৈতিক ও সামাজিক ইতিহাস নিয়ে তিনি যে বইগুলি লিখেছেন সেখানে তাঁর কোন কোন সিদ্ধান্ত যে অনেকটাই অনুমান নির্ভর তা মনে করতেই পারেন পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিকেরা। যেমন তিনি দেখাবার চেষ্টা করেছেন যে শশাঙ্ক ততটা বৌদ্ধবিদ্বেষী ছিলেন না যতটা ইতিহাস প্রমাণ করার চেষ্টা করে অথবা ধরা যাক অষ্টাদশ সৈন্য নিয়ে বখতিয়ার খিলজির নদীয়া আক্রমণ ও কালক্রমে বঙ্গবিজয়। সুকুমার সেন লিখেছেন যে এই ঘটনা মোটেই বাঙালির কাছে অগৌরবের নয়। বরং যুদ্ধবিগ্রহে বাঙালির অনভিজ্ঞতাই অনেকাংশে দায়ী। সেইজন্য বহিরাক্রমণ প্রতিহত করার মতন দৃঢ়তা, ক্ষমতা, অভিজ্ঞতা কোনোটিই বাঙালির ছিল না। তদুপরি ছিল ব্রাহ্মণ্য ও অব্রাহ্মণ্য কৃষ্টির পরস্পর সংহতির বিশেষ অভাববোধ। যদিও খিলজির বঙ্গবিজয় রাষ্ট্রব্যবস্থার দুর্বলতার বহিঃপ্রকাশ তা অস্বীকার করার উপায় নেই।

<sup>৪</sup>বাঙ্গালার ইতিহাস (১৩২১)

<sup>৯</sup>Dacca History of Bengal, Vol- II

<sup>১০</sup>Dacca History of Bengal, Vol-I

<sup>১১</sup>দ্রষ্টব্য রমাকান্ত চক্রবর্তী (২০০১), সাহিত্য পরিষৎ পত্রিকা

প্রশ্ন হল এমন অনুমান নির্ভর মন্তব্য কতটাই বা ঐতিহাসিক আর কতটাই বা কাল্পনিক? অর্থাৎ পাথুরে প্রমাণের বাইরে অনুমান নির্ভর ইতিহাস রচনা কি আদৌ সম্ভব? ঐতিহাসিকের পক্ষে কল্পনাকে কি একেবারে বর্জন করা সম্ভব? খৃস্টপূর্ব চতুর্থ শতাব্দীতে থুকিদিদাস তাঁর ‘পেলপোনেশিয়ান ওয়ার’ গ্রন্থ রচনার সময় কিন্তু প্রত্যক্ষ জ্ঞান, অনুসন্ধান ছাড়াও অনুমানকে একেবারে বাদ দিতে চাননি। বিখ্যাত ইংরেজি ঐতিহাসিক, দার্শনিক রবিন জর্জ কলিংউড (১৮৮৯-১৯৪৩) তো বলেই ছিলেন যে যথার্থ ইতিহাস রচনার তখনই সম্ভব যখন মানুষের জীবনযাপন মনন ধ্যান অনুভূতির সঙ্গে এক হওয়া যাবে। এগুলি কি সাহিত্যপাঠ থেকে সম্ভব নয়? অবশ্যই সম্ভব। যেমন সম্ভব সাহিত্যের পাতা থেকে লোকায়ত তথ্যগুলির অনুসন্ধান। ফরাসি ঐতিহাসিক এমানুয়েল লাদুরি (১৯২৯-২০০৩) দেখিয়েছিলেন যে, গীর্জায় রক্ষিত বিভিন্ন পুঁথি ও গ্রন্থ থেকে কীভাবে তৈরি হতে পারে অজানা নিম্নবর্গের ইতিহাস<sup>12</sup>। এমনকি আধুনিককালে অশীন দাশগুপ্ত<sup>13</sup> দেখেছেন ইতিহাস ও সাহিত্যের অতি ঘনিষ্ঠ সম্পর্কটি। ইতিহাস রচনার আছে বিভিন্ন ধারা, আবার আছে বিভিন্ন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি। কেউ ইতিহাস লেখেন রাজনৈতিক দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে, কেউ লেখেন ধর্মীয় দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে, কেউবা নিম্নবর্গের ইতিহাস লিখেছেন, আবার আবুল ফজল লিখেছেন রাজরাজাদের ইতিহাস। এই বিবিধ ইতিহাসের মালমশলাও বিবিধ রকম হতে পারে। তা যেমন পাথুরে প্রমাণ হতে পারে আবার সাহিত্যিক প্রমাণও হতে পারে। এই বিশ্বাস থেকেই আমরা পাই সুকুমার সেনের, প্রধানত সাহিত্য নির্ভর ইতিহাসচর্চার এক নিজস্ব ধারার। যে ধারা প্রথাগত ঐতিহাসিকদের সঙ্গে মেলে না। আবার একথাও ঠিক প্রথাগত ঐতিহাসিক চর্চার সঙ্গেও এ ধারার আপাত কোনো বিরোধও নেই। বরং বলা যেতে পারে একে অপরের পরিপূরক। প্রসংগক্রমে উল্লেখ্য কার যায় যে ঐতিহাসিক রমেশচন্দ্র মজুমদার সুকুমার সেনের ‘বঙ্গভূমিকা’ গ্রন্থের প্রশংসা করেছিলেন। পেশাদার ঐতিহাসিকেরা যখন বঙ্গের রাজনৈতিক, অর্থনৈতিক ইতিহাস নিয়ে গবেষণা করেছেন তখন সুকুমার সেন প্রাচীন ও মধ্যযুগের বাংলার জীবন ও মননকেই গবেষণার বিষয়বস্তু করেছেন, রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক ইতিহাসের থেকে বেশী গুরুত্ব দিয়েছেন সাংস্কৃতিক ইতিহাসের প্রতি। ১৯৬৭ সালে তিনি লিখেছিলেন একটি প্রবন্ধ<sup>14</sup>। প্রবন্ধটির শিরোনাম খুবই চিত্তাকর্ষক – ‘সাহিত্য-ইতিহাসের দাঁড়া’। ‘দাঁড়া’ শব্দটি উৎপত্তি সংস্কৃত ‘দণ্ড’ থেকে। অর্থ ‘ভিত’। এই ভিতের উপর দাঁড়িয়ে তিনি যেমন রচনা করেছেন বাংলা সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস ঠিক সেই ভিতের উপর দাঁড়িয়েই তিনি দেখাতে চেয়েছেন যে বাঙালির সামাজিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক ইতিহাস রচনা করাও সম্ভব। এই চেতনা তাঁর একান্ত নিজস্ব এক বৈশিষ্ট্য।

## সূত্র

দত্ত বিজিত কুমার (২০০১), সুকুমার সেনের ‘সাহিত্য ইতিহাসের দাঁড়া’, সাহিত্য-পরিষৎ-পত্রিকা, (১-৪ সংখ্যা, ১০৬ বর্ষ)

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<sup>12</sup> দ্রষ্টব্য বিজিত কুমার দত্ত (২০০১), সাহিত্য পরিষৎ পত্রিকা

<sup>13</sup> দ্রষ্টব্য ইতিহাস ও সাহিত্য (১৯৮৯), আনন্দ পাবলিশার্স

<sup>14</sup> দ্রষ্টব্য বিভাগীয় পত্রিকা, তুলনামূলক সাহিত্য, যাদবপুর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়



## The Role of Verbal Suffix *-jei* in Liangmai

Wichamdinbo Mataina<sup>1</sup>

Tetso College

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### ABSTRACT

This paper describes the grammatical role of the verbal suffix *-jei*, a declarative marker in Liangmai, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in northeast India. First, it examines the functions and occurrence of this declarative marker in different sentence types, including predicate nominals, predicate adjectives, and existential sentences. Evidence is provided that the particle *-jei* in Liangmai is not a copular verb. The suffix *-jei* does not occur in assertive future action contexts. Second, the paper also presents eight forms (allomorphs) of the declarative marker *-jei*, resulting from morphophonological processes, which typically follow both open and closed syllables. The paper offers insights for comparative studies of verbal suffixes in related languages and, more generally, contributes to the development of linguistic theories and frameworks, where these aspects pose interesting challenges and opportunities in linguistic analysis.

## 1. Introduction

This study aims to describe and analyze the grammatical function of the verbal suffix *-jei*, which serves as a declarative marker in Liangmai, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in northeastern India. The paper is organised as follows: §1 provides a concise overview of the Liangmai people and their language, accompanied by a brief literature review. §2 outlines the study's objectives, while §3 details the research methodology employed. §4 introduces ten allomorphs of the declarative marker *-jei*, complete with illustrative examples. §§5 to 7 examine the role of the suffix *-jei* across various syntactic constructions, culminating in a conclusion presented in §8.

According to Liangmai oral history, the term "Liangmai" can be traced back to the Liangmai word *kyliangkhatmai*, a compound formed from *chaki* (house), *liang* (support or backing), *khat* (one), and *mai* from *chamai* (man). This translates roughly to "one-side-people" or "one team." The term originated when the children of three brothers dispersed from Makuilongdi, a significant historical site for the Zeliangrong<sup>2</sup> people. As they left Makuilongdi, one group moved southward to unoccupied lands. These people became known as *marongmei*, meaning "people who moved to unoccupied land." Over time, this term evolved into "Rongmei," now referring to one of the Zeliangrong tribes. Similarly, the second brother's group, which

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [wichamdinbo@tetsocollege.org](mailto:wichamdinbo@tetsocollege.org)

<sup>2</sup> Zeliangrong, an indigenous ethnic group, is a conglomeration of Zeme, Liangmai and Rongmei, each with separate languages. They live in contiguous areas in the Indian states of Assam, Nagaland and Manipur.

moved toward the plains in the northwest, was called *ramzengmai*, meaning "people of the plains." This term later transformed into "Zeme." The group that remained in Makuilongdi and continued living there was called "Liangmai".

Liangmai is one of the Naga tribes living in a contiguous area in southern Nagaland and north western Manipur states. According to the census of India 2011, there are 49,811 Liangmai speakers. The population is concentrated in Tamei sub division under Tamenglong district of Manipur with a significant population in the present districts of Senapati and Kangpokpi in Manipur and Peren district of Nagaland. Other names given to Liangmai by outsiders are Kacha-Naga, Lyangmai, Liangmei or Quoireng<sup>3</sup>. Before 2012, Liangmai and a related tribe called Zeme were grouped together and officially known as Kacha-Naga in Manipur, while the same two tribes are officially called as Zeliang in Nagaland. Since 1980s, there had been a strong effort from the communities to do away with the misnomer Kacha-Naga<sup>4</sup>. Consequently, following the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Act, 2011 of the Parliament of India, and the subsequent notice by The Gazette of India dated 9th January 2012, this misnomer 'Kacha-Naga' was removed and the correct nomenclature(s) as 'Liangmai' and 'Zeme' were separately and constitutionally recognized<sup>5</sup> for the two tribes in Manipur. However, in Nagaland state government documents, Liangmai and Zeme are still clubbed together and they are known as Zeliang (Mataina, 2022).

The ISO 639-3 code for Liangmai is njn. In his classification of Naga languages, Bradley (1997: 29) group Liangmai under the sub grouping within the Southern Naga group of Tibeto-Burman Languages. Post and Burling (2017) categorized Liangmai under the Western Naga [Zeliangrong]. Other languages listed under this group by Post and Burling are Zeme [Empeo, Kachcha], Mzieme, Liangmai, Nruangmei [Rongmei, Kabui], Puiron, Khoirao [Thangal] and Maram. Other Naga languages, though they are not all placed together under any sub group by Bradley or Post and Burling, are nevertheless linguistically close to Liangmai based on the author's intuition as a native Liangmai Naga speaker. These languages are Zeme, Rongmei, Thangal, Maram, Mao, Poumai, Chakhesang, Rengma, and Angami while languages like Ao, Lotha, Tangkhul and Sumi are a little less close to Liangmai (Mataina, 2022).

Today, the Liangmai language is being passed down from parents to children in many villages. However, the long-term viability of the language remains uncertain. While many speakers are highly motivated to preserve and promote Liangmai, their efforts often fall short in practice. This is largely due to the limited economic prospects associated with the language, which leads to a greater emphasis on dominant languages such as English, Hindi, and Manipuri (also known as Meitei) across various spheres of life. There is no radio or tv programme in Liangmai. In some schools such as Hamai English High School, Langmei High School, Tamei, Olivia Higher Secondary School, Kanglatongbi introduced Liangmai as a subject of learning up to class ten based on the Board of Secondary School Education, Manipur.

There are scant reports on linguistic studies of Liangmai, particularly in the descriptive approach. Some of them are PhD theses (Charengna, 2011; Mataina, 2014; Raguibou, 2015;

<sup>3</sup> 'Quoireng' is not the same as 'Koireng/Koren' which is a tribe found in Manipur. The term Quoireng' was first used by McCulloch (1859) and later by Grierson (1903).

<sup>4</sup> This term is considered to be derogatory by some people. It is a corrupted word from an original Angami Naga word *ketsa* loosely meaning 'forest'.

<sup>5</sup> The gazette of India, Ministry of Law and Justice (2012) (<https://tribal.nic.in/DivisionsFiles/clm/25.pdf>)

Daimai, K., 2016; Daimai, G., 2016). More recent works in Liangmai include studies on Liangmai classifiers (Daimai, 2020), and reports on aspects such as morphology and morphosyntax of Liangmai can be found in Charengna (2011, 2014), Mataina (2013, 2018), Guichamlung Daimai (2013), Kailadbou Daimai (2019, 2020), I.D. Raguibou (2014), and Kailadbou Daimai & I.D. Raguibou (2020). However, the above studies have not specifically reported on the role of the declarative marker *-jei*.

## 2. Research Objective

The aim of this article is to describe and analyze the grammatical role of the verbal suffix *-jei*, a declarative marker in Liangmai, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in northeastern India. It examines the functions and occurrences of *-jei* across different sentence types, such as predicate nominals, predicate adjectives, and existential clauses, providing evidence that *-jei* is not a copular verb. The article identifies why *-jei* is used in certain contexts and omitted in others, such as interrogative or imperative sentences, and presents the morphophonological processes in Liangmai that yield eight different allomorphic forms of *-jei*. This analysis contributes to comparative studies of verbal suffixes in related languages and aims to advance linguistic theories and frameworks by examining the unique challenges posed by such morphological and syntactic features in Liangmai. In addition, the paper with plenty of data from the native speakers and the author as native speaker will be invaluable for language documentation of the language.

## 3. Research Methodology

The study presented in this paper is based on a functional approach, focusing on understanding the practical roles that language structures play in communication. It examines the communicative functions of Liangmai grammatical structures, particularly how elements like *-jei* contribute to expressing statements, intentions, or information. Data were gathered in a way that highlights the various contexts in which *-jei* is used, drawing on naturalistic examples. The analysis identifies how *-jei* functions across different sentence types, contexts, and communicative needs. The data used in this study were primarily taken from northern Liangmai villages. A brief dialectal grouping is reported by Mataina (2022). The majority of the data analyzed in this study are based on the dataset from the author's unpublished PhD thesis (Mataina, 2014). This dataset consists of 200 recorded sentences and 2,000 words, including items from Swadesh's word list.

## 4. Various forms of the Declarative Marker *-jei*

The declarative marker *-jei* in Liangmai has ten allomorphs due to morphophonological processes. They are *-pēi*, *lēi*, *gei/kēi*, *ŋēi*, *mei*, *nēi*, *ōi*, *jēi*, and *wēi*. They are presented in table 1 below.

Form	Example showing the underlying form (1st column) and assimilated forms (2nd column)	Gloss
Verb root having closed syllable		

/j/ → /p/ ____[p]	kāp-jēi →	kāp-pēi	‘cry (-DECL)’
/j/ → /l/ ____[t]	tat-jēi →	tat-lēi	‘go (-DECL)’
/j/ → /g/ ____[k]	dāk-jei →	dāk-gei/dāk-kēi	‘weave (-DECL)’
/j/ → /ŋ/ ____[ŋ]	tīŋ-jēi →	tīŋ-ŋēi	‘stingy (-DECL)’
/j/ → /m/ ____[m]	tām-jeī →	tām-meī	‘less (-DECL)’
/j/ → /n/ ____[n]	tʰón-jēi →	tʰón-nēi	‘thank (-DECL)’
Verb roots having open syllable			
/j/ → /oi/ ____[ɔ]	bō-jēi →	bōi	‘NOM-DECL’
/j/ → /j/ ____[i, e, a u]	tī-jēi →	tī-jēi	‘small (-DECL)’
	pè-jēi →	pè-jēi	‘pluck (-DECL)’
	pá-jēi →	pá-jēi	read (-DECL)’
	pù-jēi →	pù-jēi/pù-wēi	busy (DECL)’

**Table 1: Various allomorphic forms of -jei in Liangmai**

### 5. The role of -jei

The declarative marker in Liangmai signals to the listener that the utterance is intended as a declaration of fact or opinion and, most importantly, indicates the end of the sentence. It always appears at the end of sentences, suffixed to the verb, negative marker, nominal and adjectival predicates, TAM markers, or existential constructions. The following sections discuss the role of the declarative marker *-jei* in Liangmai and its occurrence and non-occurrence in sentences. In the construction of assertive future, imperative, interrogative, and other sentence types, the declarative marker is absent, with each type having its respective markers. The mid-tone declarative marker in Liangmai, one of the language’s four tone levels, remains unchanged. While the declarative marker *-jei* can be omitted from a sentence, which may make the sentence sound less natural, this is acceptable in certain contexts, such as when the speaker is in a hurry or wishes to sound casual.

*5.1 Declarative*

1. i      ná-i-mətsǎŋ      tē      tiu-jēi  
 1SG day-every      rice      eat-DECL  
 ‘I eat food everyday.’

2. nāimík      tīŋbāŋ      lāmsū      pàt-lēi  
 sun      east      from      come-DECL  
 ‘The sun rises in the east.’

3. əlěŋ-rà      tət<sup>h</sup>è-tīŋ      nīu      wī-t<sup>h</sup>ù-jēi  
 1SG.POSS-for-DEL winter-time CONTR good-SUP-jēi  
 ‘For me, winter is the best season.’

In Liangmai, omitting the declarative marker, as in example (4), is grammatically correct but may sound impolite. It is acceptable to omit it when expressing anger or sulkiness.

4. ī      tē      tiu  
 1SG cooked-rice      eat  
 ‘I ate food (yesterday).’

5. ī      tāt      lāk  
 1SG go      NEG  
 ‘I won’t go.’ -(expressing in anger)

*5.2 Imperative*

As noted above, a declarative marker is absent in imperative constructions. The imperative clause is marked with the imperative marker -lau. It should be noted that if an imperative clause is a negative construction using the negative marker -*mak*, a different imperative marker, -*nei*, is used (see discussion on negation in §3.4).

5. wāŋ-lāu  
 come-IMP  
 ‘Come!’

6. ñ.tàu-láu

sit-IMP

‘Sit!’

7. tà<sup>th</sup>ì tu fúi-láu

PRE-dog ACC watch-IMP

‘Watch out for the dog’ (to avoid its biting).

8. kám tú-láu

‘do PROH-IMP’

‘Do not do’.

9. pə̀gə̀j bām sāi ə̀-tū kól kám-láu

need exist-then 1SG-ACC call do-IMP

‘If needed, call me.’

### 5.3 Interrogative

As is common with many Tibeto-Burman languages, three types of interrogative clauses can be identified in Liangmai: content questions, polar questions, and Wh- questions. Additionally, yes/no questions and tag questions are present but are not discussed here. As noted above, the declarative marker does not occur in interrogative constructions. The interrogative marker always occurs at the end of a sentence. The two interrogative markers in Liangmai are -ma and -lau. Either of these markers is used, depending on the type of interrogation; in some cases, both are used.

#### 5.3.1 Content interrogative

Content question or Wh- questions are formed by suffixing an interrogative marker -lau. Examples 10-12 illustrate content questions.

Form	Gloss	Class
ñdē	what	thing
ñdē-lām	where	location
ñdē-zə̀ŋnīu	why	reason
ñdē-gà	where	location (definite/goal)



sāu	who	person
ṇdē-tsíu	how	manner
ṇdē-zī	which	person/thing
ṇdē-zìu	how many	quantity/price
ṇdē-dāu	when	time

**Table 2.** *Interrogative pronouns in Liangmai*

10. nāṇ ṇdē-ga luṇ bam-lau?  
 2SG where live exist-QPTCL  
 ‘Where do you live’

11. pā sāu-lau?  
 3SG who-QPTCL  
 ‘Who is he?’

12. tsəmāi k<sup>h</sup>áṇ ṇdēzìu nēkī-gā bām-lāu  
 PRE-man CL- how 2SG.POSS-house-PP exist-QPTCL  
 ‘How many person(s) are there in your house?’

### 5.3.2 Disjunctive interrogative

For disjunctive interrogative construction, two interrogative particles -ma and -lau are used, where the later marker -lau can be optional. Both occur at the end of the interrogative clause. Examples 13-16 illustrate disjunctive interrogative constructions.

13. nāṇ wī-mā sà-lau?  
 2SG good-QPTCL  
 ‘Are you a good (person) or bad?’

14. tāt-ma, bām-lāu?  
 go-QPTCL stay-QPTCL  
 ‘(will you) go or stay?’

15. kēbāk zān-ma, mótōm zān-lau?  
 PRE-pig meat-QPTCL cow meat-QPTCL  
 ‘Pork or beef?’

16. tsə̀lǝ      tət-mā      tət-māk-lāu?

PRE-field go-QPTCL go-NEG-QPTCL

‘(Will you) go to field or not?’

### 5.3.3 Polar interrogative

Polar questions are formed by suffixing -ma at the end of the sentence. This type of question is usually responded to with a single word, such as repeating one of the verbs from the interrogative sentence, using another verbal suffix such as negation or a future marker, or responding with jō ‘yes’ or a humming utterance like hm-hm, which is difficult to transcribe and means ‘no.’ Determiner ‘hái is the alternative negative particle used to express ‘no’ when responding to any polar question. This negative particle is often used by the listener in situations where the speaker offers a polar question to the listener to take something in kind. However, this particle is very informal.

16. nāŋ wī bām-mā?

2SG good PROG-QPTCL

‘How are you?’ (Lit. Are you good?)

17. tsə̀lǝ      tət-mā ?

PRE-field go-QPTCL

‘(Will you) go to field?’

18. tǝhǝi-rà sī-mí-mā?

now-DEL know-PERF-QPTCL

‘Have you understood now?’

### 5.4 Negation

The seven negative markers in Liangmai are mak, lak, tǝ, tā, nǝ, and hā. There is one more negative marker, hái, used to express ‘no’ in response to a polar question. Among them, /mak/ and /lak/ can occur in almost all types of clausal constructions, including interrogative sentences, except for imperative constructions. The declarative marker -jei, when following a velar coda -k (as in -mak and -lak), becomes -gei due to assimilation. In the South Eastern Liangmai variety, the declarative marker -kēi is common after these two negators, e.g., tət-lāk-kēi ‘(I) will not go.’ However, the role of this marker remains the same; it declares a statement or indicates the end of a sentence.

#### 3.4.1 The negative particles -mak and -lak

The two negative markers, -mak and -lak, each have distinct functions. The negator -mak is used to express sentences that convey non-future actions and prohibitive sentences, while the negator

-lak is used to express future actions and interrogative clauses. Examples of the usage of the negator -mak are shown in 19-21 below, while examples of the negative marker -lak are shown in 22-24. Table 3 summarizes the negative markers in Liangmai.

19. i ɲdānāi kǝhúi tət-màk-gēi

1P yesterday Kohima go-NEG-DECL

‘I didn’t go to Kohima yesterday.’

20. nǎimík tīŋ-pī lǎmsū pət-màk-gēi

sun atmosphere-head from come-NEG-DECL

‘The sun does not rise from the north.’

21. tiu-màk-néi

eat-NEG-FUT

‘Do not eat (it).’

22. tīŋ sà-làk-gēi

weather rain-NEG-DECL

‘It will not rain.’

23. tsǝgǎn tiu-sà-lāk-gēi

PRE-curry eat-bad-NEG-DECL

‘The curry will be good to eat (Lit. the curry will not be bad to eat).’

24. pǎ nǝ-tū fùt-lāk-gēi

1SG 2SG-ACC leave-NEG-DECL

‘He will not leave you.’

Negative particle	Function
màk,	non future; prohibitive, hortative sentences
lāk	future and interrogative sentences
tù	prohibitive
tā	imperative, politeness, assertive statement, reportive statement

nǎu	taboo
hā	expressing absence
hái	expressing no to polar question

**Table 3:** *Summary of negative particles in Liangmai*

### 5.5 Exclamatory

The declarative marker -jēi occurs in the exclamatory sentence and occurs at the end of the sentence. They are shown in 25 and 26 below.

25. ɪ ə-tsūn wī-zū-jēi

1SG 1SG.POSS-mind good-adv-DECL

‘I am very happy!’

26. hīŋ! ə-sōŋ hā-jēi

EXCL 1SG.POSS-mind absent-DECL

‘Oh, I am surprise. (Lit. oh, my mind disappeared).’

### 5.6 Conditional

The declarative marker -jēi does not occur in exclamatory sentences, except in a type of conditional sentence that expresses a possible future situation and its likely result, as in 28. The conditional marker or conjunction sái ‘if’ and the future marker -néi are used to express future conditional sentences, as shown in 27-29, while the same markers are also used for past hypothetical conditional constructions with the perfect aspect marker bām ‘have,’ as shown in 30 below.

27. nāŋ wāŋ-nēi sái, ɪ k<sup>h</sup>ōn-nēi

2SG come-FUT if 1SG wait-FUT

‘If you will come, I will wait.’

28. tīŋ-rīu sái, əlīu tāt-lāk-gēi

weather-shower if 1PL go-NEG-DECL

‘If it rains, we will not go.’

29. nāŋ māi-tù ɲk<sup>h</sup>ā sái, māi nə-tū ɲk<sup>h</sup>ā-néi.

2SG person-ACC help if person 2SG-ACC help-FUT

‘If you help other, other will help you.’

30. i    nǎtū            ŋāu    sái,    nǎtū            dín-bī            bām-néi  
       1SG 2SG-ACC    see    if       2SG-ACC    say-give       ?-will

‘Had I seen you (yesterday), I would have told you.’

### 5.7 Hortative

The declarative marker -jēi does not occur in hortative sentence. Examples of hortative sentences are illustrated in 31-33 below.

31. tāt ṇ̄tsám-k<sup>h</sup>ēi

go same-HORT

‘(Let’s) go together.’

32. tūhōi tē tiu-k<sup>h</sup>ēi

now rice eat-HORT

‘(Let’s) eat rice now.’

33. zī-k<sup>h</sup>ēi

sleep-HORT

‘(Let’s) sleep.’

## 6. Nominal Predicates

Nominal predicates typically express qualities, identities, or states of being without the need for a copular verb, such as ‘to be’ in English, in Liangmai, like in many Tibeto-Burman languages. While the declarative marker can be omitted in nominal predicates, sentences sound more natural when it is included. Examples 34-37 illustrate identity, while examples 38-39 indicate quality, and examples 40-41 express a state of being.

34. ī            hāi    ṇ̄pūi-jēi

1SG        EMP    road-DECL

‘I am the way.’

35. si-zī sīngīu-wēi

DIST-EMP river-DECL

‘That is a river.’

36. pǎ ǎ-tsǐ-jēi

3SG 1POSS-brother-DECL

‘He is my brother.’

37. hāi-nā-sī ṇpíu-māi-jēi

PROX-DET male-person-DECL

‘He is a man.’

38. pǎ nǐṇtīṇ-ṇēi

3SG wise-DECL

‘He is wise.’

39. ǎ-pǔi wī-jēi

1SG.POSS-female good-DECL

‘My mother is good.’

40. pǎ kepten-nēi

3SG captain-DECL

‘He is the captain.’

41. tsǎ-gǎn-dūi tʰíu-wēi

PRE-curry-water hot-DECL

‘The soup is hot.’

## 7. Adjectival Predicates

As is well known, adjectival predicates, which describe the qualities or states of the subject, often exhibit different morphosyntactic behaviours in Tibeto-Burman languages. The word order for adjectival predicates in Liangmai is Subject-Adjective (42-45). The declarative marker appears at the end.

42. ī kú-wēi

1SG high-DECL

‘I am tall.’

43. nāŋ tán-nēi

2SG strong-DECL

‘You’re strong.’

44. ĩ ət̚sūn wī-jēi

1SG 1POSS-heart good-DECL

45. ĩ lāk-gēi

1SP tire-DECL

‘I am tired.’

## 7. Existential

The declarative marker is present in existential constructions. An existential marker indicates the existence or presence of something and asserts the existence of a person, object, or event. The grammatical marker -bām is used to indicate an existential construction in Liangmai. The homophone -bām is also used to mark the present continuous aspect in Liangmai, as in *pə̀l̩u tət̩ bām-mēi* ‘They are walking.’ Examples 46-49 show existential sentences in Liangmai. It is important to note that the pitch of the tone in example 49 changes due to the tone alternation process.

46. tsə̀k̩ s̩m bām-mēi

PRE-house three EXIS-DECL

‘There are three houses.’

47. tsə̀l̩ gā tsə̀-m̩i bām-mēi

PRE-farm PP PRE-man EXIS-DECL

‘There is a person in the farm.’

48. t̩z̩ s̩ŋ-bāŋ gā bām-mēi

‘monkey wood-tree PP EXIS-DECL

‘The monkey is on the tree.’

49. p̩k̩ gā bām-mēi

‘INAL-branch PP EXIS-DECL

‘(He) is in the corner.’

## 8. Conclusion

The paper focuses on the grammatical role of the verbal suffix -jei in Liangmai, a Tibeto-Burman language. The suffix functions as a declarative marker, signalling the end of a sentence and indicating that the utterance is a statement or declaration of fact. This marker is used in various sentence types, including declarative sentences with verbs, nominal predicates, adjectival predicates, and existential constructions. Overall, this paper provides a detailed account of the syntactic and morphophonological behaviour of the -jei suffix, contributing to a broader understanding of verbal suffixes in Tibeto-Burman languages. It could serve as a basis for comparative studies in related languages.

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## Taboo Language in Keralan Culture: Unravelling Attitudes and Evolution Among Young Adults in Kerala

Anupama T<sup>1</sup>

English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad

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### ABSTRACT

The use of taboo words has always been crucial to communication. To examine how taboo language is accepted and adapted within Keralan society, this research focuses on the viewpoints of persons born in the 1990s and 2000s. This population includes people from various dialects, exposures, social identities, faiths, religions, regions, political ideologies, and castes. The purpose of the study is to compare the results across generations to better understand how people born in the 1990s and 2000s view taboos and how they are accepted in culture. It considers if it is possible to lessen bias and sexism connected with them while understanding their origins founded in misogyny or prejudice. It looks at how these taboo phrases fit into contemporary Malayali society. A social media Google form was circulated online to gather information and resolve gender-based inequality in opinions. Further, a selected group of individuals within the survey was personally interviewed. This study clarifies how taboos communicate norms and values through language. It reveals the meanings and implications of words in modern Indian society by studying how they have evolved within shifting standards. It emphasizes how crucial it is to understand the linguistic underpinnings of these events.

## 1. Introduction

The dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity (Bhabha, Homi K; Nation and Narration (1990), societal standards, and individual expression (Bhargava, Rajeev; What is Political Theory and Why Do We Need It? (2010) are all reflected in a person's language, which is a component of human civilization that is constantly changing and evolving. Among the many facets of language, one that is fascinating and divisive is the use of taboo words. Language reflects cultural norms and beliefs, as established by Sapir (1924) and Whorf (1940), and taboo language is essential to human communication.

In the rich and varied setting of Kerala culture, this study explores the complex panoramas and cultural adaptations surrounding taboo words. It focuses in particular on the viewpoints of those who were born in the 1990s and 2000s, resulting in two distinct generations. Studies on language acquisition and sociolinguistics provide information about the variations in language and education between generations. Chomsky (1965) and Labov (1972) conducted various research on language development and generational disparities.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [anupamaphdlandp21@efluniversity.ac.in](mailto:anupamaphdlandp21@efluniversity.ac.in)

The major advantages that the generation of the 2000s had from that of the generation of the 1990s are many, because of which both the generations had different growth development conditions. The generation of the 2000s had wide exposure to a variety of languages, which resulted from the ease of travel and internet access, as well as their early exposure to numerous languages in their primary school. In addition, the generation of the 2000s has come into contact with a diverse range of social identities, such as gender and socioeconomic identities, as well as different castes and religions within society. Their varied viewpoints and experiences are a result of their comprehensive education and friendships, which have exposed them to individuals from many castes, religions, and geographical areas. The world of the internet was introduced to the 1990s generation only when they were in their high school education and beyond while the generation of the 2000s had much earlier access to it.

Taboo language has always been a crucial component of human communication, reflecting cultural norms and beliefs. The subtleties of taboo language differ substantially from place to region and even within linguistic groupings in the Indian context, where cultural diversity is celebrated. Our study intends to investigate how Keralan society perceives and uses taboo words while taking into account the socio-cultural background in the state.

The impact of recent explicit slur usage in popular entertainment and ordinary dialogue is particularly fascinating. Relevant concerns regarding these phrases' adoption and adaption into common speech have been highlighted by their widespread use in media and on digital platforms. Additionally, this research closely examines the songs and dialogues in the old Malayalam films, which are at present realized to have implied taboo word usage, this study explores the linguistic past of Keralan society.

We focus on the attitudes and adjustments of individuals born in the 1990s and 2000s. The generation of the 1990s is profoundly anchored in traditional values while navigating the intricacies of modern culture. On the other hand the generation of the 2000s is more modernized as they were more exposed to the world of the internet and thereby to the outer world from a young age. In this research, we compare and contrast the opinions of these two generations to better understand the dynamics of taboo language within Keralan society. We seek to shed light on how the taboo language fits into current Malayali society by gathering and comparing replies from various age groups. We investigate the prospect of reducing sexism and bias in swearing, which is crucial because some of these phrases may have historical associations with prejudice and misogyny.

We intentionally targeted both male and female informants in an online Google form that we ran across several social media platforms in search of comprehensive data. This method reveals how language interacts with gender dynamics by allowing us to identify potential gender-based differences in attitudes toward taboo language. A set of informants who participated in the form was interviewed based on convenience sampling to understand more about their opinions.

This study emphasizes how crucial taboos are in informing and communicating social norms and values through language. We hoped to understand the complex implications of taboo words in modern Indian society by placing them within their historical and cultural settings. By doing this, we advance knowledge of this linguistic phenomenon and emphasize how crucial it is to take taboo language's cultural and linguistic roots into account.

In this research paper, we set out on an adventure through the complex web of language, gender, and modernity to uncover the numerous layers of taboo language within Indian culture and how it has developed to reflect the shifting norms of our diverse community. We intend to shed light on this intricate and constantly changing linguistic phenomenon through in-depth examination and intelligent conversations.

## 2. Research Objectives

- How have taboo words in Malayalam evolved concerning the origin and rich and diverse Keralan culture?
- What is the impact of the explicit usage of taboo language in films on Keralan society?
- What is the relationship between gender dynamics and attitudes towards taboo language in Keralan society?

## 3. Theoretical Background

### 3.1 Homi K. Bhabha's Concept of Hybridity (*Nation and Narration*, 1990)

Understanding the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity in language requires an understanding of Bhabha's concept of hybridity. The term "hybridity" refers to the blending of various cultural aspects, which reflects the varied cultural contexts and perspectives surrounding taboo terms in Keralan society. Bhabha's theories offer a theoretical framework for examining how language, especially taboo language, in the context of Kerala culture negotiates between traditional values and contemporary demands.

### 3.2 Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (*Sapir*, 1924; *Whorf*, 1940)

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis emphasizes how language shapes cognition and society. It offers a theoretical framework for comprehending how language both creates and reflects societal norms and values in the setting of taboo language. The exploration of the complexities of taboo language in the Keralan context, which celebrates cultural diversity, and how these linguistic nuances differ between linguistic groups and regions is guided by this idea.

### 3.3 Rajeev Bhargava's Exploration of Societal Standards (*What is Political Theory and Why Do We Need It?* 2010)

Bhargava offers a theoretical framework for comprehending individual expression and societal standards in his work on political philosophy. Bhargava's findings are put to use in putting people's views and modifications from the 1990s and 2000s into a larger context of societal values. This aids in the investigation of the dynamics of taboo language in Keralan society.

## 4. Research Methodology

To thoroughly examine attitudes and the development of taboo language among young adults in Kerala, India, this research uses a mixed-methods approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The study is essentially a sociolinguistic survey analysis, with an emphasis on people born in the 1990s (1990-1999) and 2000s (2000-2005) to understand the generational difference and to better comprehend how taboo language is accepted and changed within these generations.

Kerala is the southernmost state in India with around 35 million people of which around eight million people were individuals born between 1990 to 2005.

The target group for the study is a broad and heterogeneous group of young adults in Kerala who were born between 1990 to 2005. To fully express Kerala's unique tapestry of cultural and demographic diversity, informants from a variety of dialect origins, social identities, religions and castes, and political ideologies are included.

Under the various dialects, we have informants familiar with the Kozhikode dialect, Malappuram dialect, Thrissur dialect, and Thiruvananthapuram dialect. Under various social identities, we had informants who identified themselves to be homosexuals and heterosexuals also from economic classes (upper class, middle class, and lower class), and whose forefathers were from the savarna (upper caste/ upper class) and avarna (lower caste/ lower class). Under religions, we had people from the Hindu, Muslim, and Christian. In Kerala, people freely follow various political ideologies and these ideologies shape their perception and usage of taboo language. There were informants who followed the Communist, Congress, Hindutva, and Religious and identity-based ideologies.

An online survey is being used to gather quantitative information about informants' attitudes towards taboo language, its use, and how it fits into contemporary culture. The questions are designed to extract information about particular topics, such as gender-based differences in opinions and the historical context of taboo words. There were questions being asked to look into the occurrence of taboo words in Malayalam, prompts were given to the participants to rightly lead the informants to get particular lexical items, and the acceptance of the terms by the informants and within the society was enquired about. In the interview, the exchange of individual experiences and observations was also encouraged. The informant's ideas and knowledge of the etymology of the various taboo words were taken note of.

A portion of the informants was chosen for in-depth interviews to supplement the quantitative data. With the help of the semi-structured interviews, attitudes, and experiences relating to taboo language were explored in greater detail, revealing insightful qualitative information about people's opinions and societal standards. As some of the informants themselves belonged to the oppressed class to which some of these taboo words were related, their personal experiences and how they faced and reacted to the taboo words were taken into account.

The online survey is disseminated through Kerala-specific online groups and across several social media channels. This technique allows for the inclusion of people from varied backgrounds and assures comprehensive data collection. Informants are chosen with their informed consent and are guaranteed privacy.

From the informants from whom a positive response was received to conduct the personal interview, the participants were contacted personally to understand their social background, after which the purposive sampling method was used to collect information from the in-depth interviews such that there is diversity in terms of age, gender, linguistic background, and socioeconomic level. Depending on the convenience and preference of the informant, interviews were conducted either in person or by video conference.

Along with the link to the survey, a consent form was attached which stated the purpose of the research, and the email address of the researcher. The informants were requested to send back the consent form to the email mentioned. Though the contact numbers of the informants who were willing to participate in the further in-person survey were collected in the Google

form, it was also asked to be filled up in the consent form. After the initial interview, it was conveyed to the informants about a second round of interviews so that the informants could ponder more on the questions and add more information or lexical items.

A total of 52 responses were received from the online survey of which 34 were females and 18 were males. 28 were from the 1990s 24 were from the 2000s. From the responses received, five male informants and five females born in the 1990s and the same numbers born in the 2000s were further scrutinized. Among these 20 informants, two males and two females from each cohort were further selected for in-depth interviews, thus a total of eight informants participated in both interviews.

The quantitative data from the online survey was analyzed to understand the frequency of the lexical items provided by the informants, and the informant's attitudes and perception towards taboo language in Malayalam. The changing trend in the Keralan culture with respect to the acceptance or and rejection of taboo language in the public domain and the evolution of taboo language were analyzed. Thematic analysis is used to find recurrent themes and patterns in the informant narratives by transcribing qualitative data from in-depth interviews. The thematic analysis helped in tracing the etymology of some of the taboo words and their history being closely related to the subaltern community's identity (caste and name).

The study complies with ethical standards, ensuring that all informants participated voluntarily and with full knowledge and consent. Informants were made aware of the goals of the research as well as their rights, including the freedom to quit at any time.

Results are compared between individuals born in the 1990s and 2000s, to address the generational aspect of the study. The differences in opinions between men and women are also examined.

The study tries to clarify the intricate interactions among taboo language, cultural context, and generational views in Kerala, India. It advances our knowledge of linguistic evolution and the function of language in reflecting and forming social norms and values by examining how taboo language is accepted and adapted within Indian society.

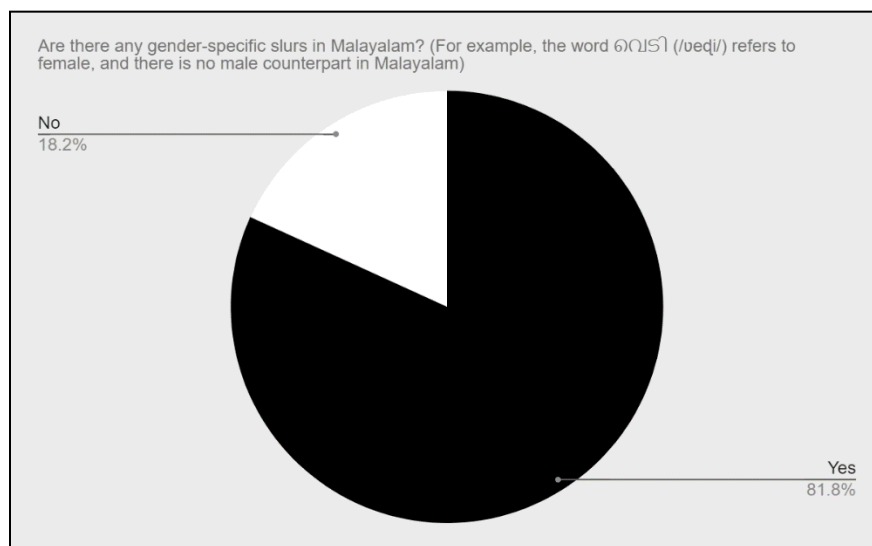
#### *4.1 Data*

The outcome of the online survey and interview conducted among the Malayali population sheds light on how people feel and view taboo language concerning gender and generational aspects. The survey respondents demonstrated knowledge of the existence of gender-specific terms in Kerala and differing degrees of acceptability of them across different regions of Kerala. It is evident from the data that different people belonging to different genders and generations have different opinions and views on how taboo terms are used in Keralan culture, with a focus on gender-related differences.

##### *4.1.1 Gender-Specific Taboo Words in Malayalam*

Various informants recognized taboo words were misogynistic and patriarchal in Malayalam. These are generally derogatory and meant specifically to denigrate women. It is interesting that, as some respondents noted, there aren't many taboo words directed specifically to denigrate men in Malayalam. This implies that there is blatant gender bias in the language concerning the taboo language.

Informants in the Google form had marked that there is a gender bias in the existence of taboo words. The informants indicated the presence of gender-specific taboo words, i.e., taboo words specific to either female gender or male gender, with their male or female counterparts accordingly being absent in the society or the society does not use them.



**Figure 1:** Pie-chart representation of survey results on whether there are taboo words exclusively used for a particular gender and whether there is no equivalent taboo word for the opposite gender.

The analysis from the interview gave more insights into the meaning of the taboo words targeted against women. It was found that most of the taboo words originated from the misogynist and patriarchal roots of the society; thereby some terms specifically targeted women who stood against these societal norms, which were slut shaming in nature.

The following table demonstrates a set of taboo words that the informants suggested that according to them are gender-specific, i.e., either the word is male-specific or female-specific and there exist no counterparts in the language. The lexical items in this table were contributed from both the survey as well as from the interview. Most of the lexical items were added after the second round of interviews as the informants pondered deeply into the research after the first interview and took note of more lexical items.

The following table indicates gender-specific taboo words in Malayalam as specified by the informants. The table presents information on gendered taboo words in Keralan society. The table also gives denotative or connotative meanings in English. The denotative meaning might not have a negative inference, but the connotative meaning will have one. Hence, the word list below might have other denotative meanings which might not be vulgar but the connotative meanings have a vulgar connotation. It is to be noted that as per the Keralan societal norms, certain things are looked upon like a female engaging in multiple partners is loathed and the society insists that a female should protect her body and should safeguard her body for her 'husband' no other males should see the intimate female body parts, similarly the society believes that individuals engage in sex for reproducing the next generation and hence any sexual

relations that do not facilitate the same are discouraged, this is the reason why homosexual relationships and infertility in women are frowned upon (one should take note that the society is patriarchal and hence an infertile male is not similarly disparaged).

The same patriarchal society is the reason for having a synonym to ‘feminism’ (/feminiʃi/) being taboo because people believe that feminism means placing women above men which goes against the patriarchal ideas ingrained in society. It is not only males but also many females who think that ‘feminism is not equality’, for instance, a notable example can be observed in a cooking show aired on the Malayalam television channel 'Amrita TV,' where the conversation unfolds between the Malayalam film actress Sarayu and the host, another prominent Malayalam actress, Annie. When the conversation is about feminism Sarayu says, “എന്തിനാണ് ഫെമിനിസം? ഇക്വാലിറ്റി വരട്ടെ.” (/ent̪inaːnə feminisam/ ikvaːlitti varat̪te// Why do we need feminism? Let there be equality.) (Amrita TV Cookery Show.2018, June 25, 33:49). Thus, the females who advocate for feminism are seen as ‘someone who wants to dominate male’ which is against the patriarchal, misogynistic, and chauvinistic society thus there is a deliberate attempt to shame anyone who is against these ideas in the society. The word ഫെമിനിഷ് (/feminiʃi/ Feminist) doesn’t have a male counterpart as it is always perceived as the notion of inequality, where females rule over male and if at all ‘males dominate and rule over females,’ it is ‘natural’ and males are supposed to be in a higher ground than females. Hence it is not taboo in society.

The society only identifies gender (sex) by birth and thus non-binary gender identities are not well-accepted. However, efforts are constantly made to make society understand the existing misogynistic, patriarchal, and gender insensitivity in society.

Female	Male	English	Denotation/
		Connotation	
ved̪i	-	Female who has multiple relationships/ Prostitute/ Whore.	(sex) and
kuːʈʈiʃi	-	Female who has multiple relationships/ Bitch.	(sex)
t̪arakkə	-	Female figure in a sexual connotation/ Female who has big (huge) breasts and buttocks.	



te:viɖitʃi	-	Female sex worker (Prostitute)/ Female with multiple sex partners.
ve:ʃja	-	Female sex worker (Prostitute)/ Female with multiple sex partners.
-	ta:jo:li/ ta[la]jo:li	Mother fucker.
paɖakkam	-	Female who has multiple (sex) relationships/ and Prostitute/ Whore.
feminitʃi	-	Feminist in a negative connotation/ Female who stands against patriarchy.
-	kunɖan	Homosexual male (gay) (Used in a negative connotation to indicate that being gay is against the social norms).
puɖitʃi	-	Female who has multiple (sex) relationships/ Homosexual female (Lesbian) (Used in a negative connotation to indicate that being lesbian is against the social norms)
matʃi	-	

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-	va:ṇam	Infertile female (Used to indicate that infertility in females is to be looked down upon)
pe.ṭa/ pe.ṭat̃ṭ̃aṭ̃ə	-	Homosexual male (gay) (Used in a negative connotation to indicate that being gay is against the social norms).
aṭṭiṇṇa:t̃ṭ̃akka:ri	-	Female who has multiple (sex) relationships/ Sexually active women (Used to disdain females being sexually more active than males, indicating it to be against societal norms).
t̃ṭ̃akka	-	Arrogant female/ Female who stand against the social guidelines or patriarchy.
-	t̃ṭ̃a:ṇḍəpott̃ə	Female breast in a negative connotation/ Female having big breasts.
-	pa:va:ḍa /	Male who behaves like a female/ Transwoman (Used to scorn upon transwomen, as per societal standards gender (sex) is either male or female).

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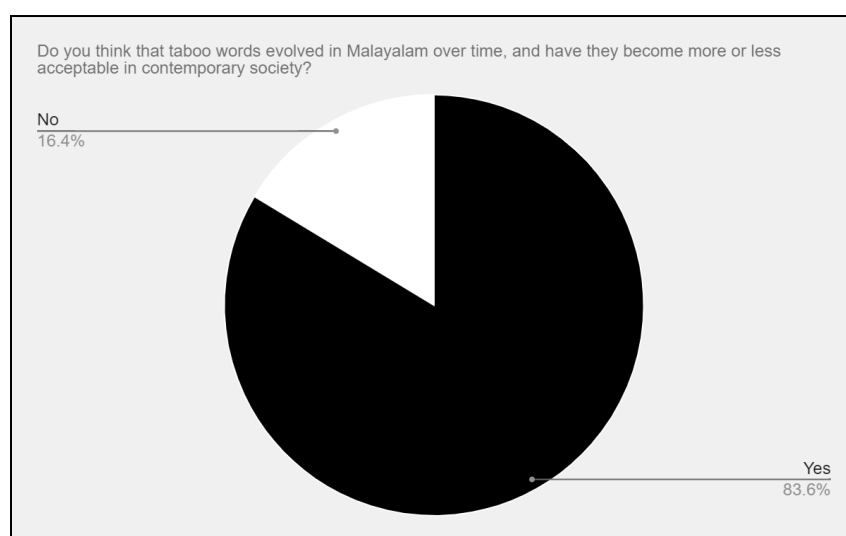
	penṇa:tʃʃi	Male who lives under his wife's protection/ Househusband (Used as an indication that the society is patriarchal and hence male is the breadwinner in the family).
-	pi:qʰanavi:ran	
-	stri:la:mbaḍan	Male who engages in multiple sex/ Male rapist.
-	ko:ɽi	Philanderer
-	pu:ran	White knight/ the guy who gives unsolicited help to girls in the expectations of higher social acceptance among the girls.
fu:rppaṇagʰa	-	Male who behaves like female/ Transwoman (Used to scorn upon transwoman, as per societal standards gender (sex) is either male or female).
		Arrogant female/ Female who stands against patriarchy.

**Table 1:** Gender-specific taboo words in Malayalam

## 4.1.2 Evolution of Taboo Language

Numerous informants have observed a shift in the taboo word meaning and usage. Informants believe that certain lexical items that were previously viewed as taboo have now lost their taboos and certain other lexical items which were not taboo in the past have now gained a taboo nature. Other taboo words are identified as taboo but are seen constantly being used in day-to-day life. The fact that these taboo words have become more benign with frequent use and demystification is acknowledged by the informants. The concept that words carry social connotations and can lead to desensitization through repeated use is discussed by scholars such as Bhabha, who explores the intricate interplay of language and cultural identity (Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, 1990).

Regarding whether taboo words in Malayalam have changed over time, respondents' perspectives are not all the same. While some disagree, others think they have gained more acceptance in modern culture. This implies continuing discussions concerning acceptable language usage.



**Figure 2:** Pie-chart representation of the survey results on the informant's thoughts on whether taboo words acceptance in society has changed or not.

In the two sets of interviews conducted a list of taboo words was given by the informants that have evolved. Some of the words in the list showed the lexical item was considered taboo in the past but has lost its taboo, while there are a set of other lexicons that were not taboo in the past but are at present taboo. A third set of words were also provided which were demystified taboo words. The interview gave insights on the personal experiences of the informants, and how and why the lexical items are taboo. In what conditions and context did they evolve to be taboo or not taboo anymore?

The following table is formulated by taking into account the lexical items provided in the survey and the interviews. The table comprises taboo words that fall under the earlier discussed three sets.

The table lists sets of taboo words as indicated by the informants, who identified certain words as taboo in their childhood but are not any more or are becoming more commonly used in a public setting even if it has a taboo connotation, indicating demystification of taboo words.

They have also listed words that had neutral meanings in the past but are now being termed taboo words.

Neutral in the Past	Neutral at Present	Taboo words which are more common in Present Kerala Society	English Denotative/ Connotative Meaning
vedī	-	-	Female who has multiple (sex) relationships/ and Prostitute/ Whore.
paḍakkam	-	-	Female who has multiple (sex) relationships/ and Prostitute/ Whore.
feminitʃtʃi	-	-	Feminist in a negative connotation/ Female who stands against patriarchy.
tʃakka	-	-	Female breast in a negative connotation/ Female having big breasts.
-	-	mu:ntʃi	To get fucked up/ to be screwed over.
-	-	ʃa:jo:li/	

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		ṭaḷḷajo:ḷi	Mother fucker.
-	-	pu:ri	Female pubic hair/ Pussy hair.
-	-	va:ṇam	Homosexual male (gay) (Used in a negative connotation to indicate that being gay is against the social norms).
ṭṣa:ṇḍəpotṭə	-	-	Male who behaves like female/ Transwoman (Used to scorn upon transwoman, as per societal standards gender (sex) is either male or female).
pa:va:ḍa / peṇṇa:ṭṣṭi	-	-	Male who lives under his wife's protection/ Househusband (Used as an indication that the society is patriarchal and hence male is the breadwinner in the family).
-	aṭṭṇa:ṭṭakka:ri	-	

-	afiŋga:ri	-	Arrogant female/ Female who stand against the social guidelines or patriarchy.
-	-	pu:ran	Arrogant female/ Female who stand against the social guidelines or patriarchy.
-	-	fu:rppaŋag <sup>h</sup> a	Male who behaves like female/ Transwoman (Used to scorn upon transwoman, as per societal standards gender (sex) is either male or female).
-	ku:ɽara	-	Arrogant female/ Female who stand against the social guidelines or patriarchy.
-	po:kkə	-	Cheap/ Low-class/ Cultureless
-	-	maɪr	Ill-famed person/ miscreant

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-	-	ko:ɭani	Pubic hair (Indicates both male or female)
-	patti	-	People who live in colonies or slum areas (Indicates that people who live in slums are uncivilized or uncultured).
-	-	kunṇa	
-	-	aṇḍi	Dog/ Bitch.
-	-	aṭṭiṭṭiṇṇa kunṇaṇ	Penis/ Dick
-	-	ṭṭaṇḍi	Penis/ Dick
-	-	aḍṭṭiṭṭa poḷikkuka	Man whose penis (dick) is like beans.
-	-	aḍṭṭiṭṭa kettuka	Ass
-	-	amme:ṇṭepu:rə	To fucking enjoy something/ To enjoy something by fucking
ammijṇa	-	-	To fuck someone up
-	-	u:mbuka	(Your) mother's pussy



			Breast/ Boobs
-	ḍuṣṭan (male)/ ḍuṣṭaṭi	-	To suck (someone's dick or vagina)
-	-	intʃi mula	To call someone an asshole
-	ka:ttu pu:ri	-	Young and hard breasts (boobs) (To indicate the female has never engaged in sex before and hence the breast is hard)
-	-	ki:ppu	Female with pussy like forest (Indicates that the female has a lot of pussy hair)
-	polaja:ḍi / polaja:ḍi (male)/	mo:n -	Concubine/ Mistress (Indicates a female who lives with and has a sexual relationship with a man with whom she is not married)

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	polaja:ɖi (female)	mo:l	Rouge/ Miscreant/ Scoundrel (Indicates an etymological derivation to a scheduled caste in Kerala (/polaja/). Using the term indicates
-	ku:ɽi	-	associating someone to the said caste and in a roundabout way
-	-	ku:ttitɽi	saying the said caste people are scoundrels or
-	-	ko:ɽam	rascals).
			Anus
-	-	ko:ɽam kalakki	
-	kuɽɽiə / kuɽi	-	Bitch/ Female with multiple sex partners.
			Ass
-	kuɽama:vuka	-	To fuck through the anus.
-	-	kuɽɽi kuɽɽan	To fart.
-	-	kuɽɽa pa:l	Referring to the damaging and widening of the vagina due to
-	-	kuɽɽa ɽɽappukka	over fucking.
-	-	mattɽɽa pu:r	

-	-	-	Male with small penis.
-	mle:tʃʃan	u:kkuka	Sperm.
-	-	pala	To suck the penis.
-	-	ʃa:ta:ʃa:kkunɖa:ja	Pumpkin pussy
-	-	ʃa:jo:li	(To indicate a big pussy).
-	-	pa:ɳɖi	Ignorant person
-	-	-	To fuck.
-	-	-	Son who was born to more than one father/ Bastard.
banɳa:li	-	-	Tamil (Indicate a racist slur, addressing someone means the person is black or is rude, the word etymologically derived from the migrated coolie workers from Tamil Nadu)
-	-	-	Bengali (Racist slur, which is now commonly used

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-		peṭat̪t̪u pettavan	to refer to migration workers in Kerala who are from North-India need not typically be a Bangla speaker. Addressing someone the same means the person is unhygienic, rude, and uses chewing or smokeless tobacco).
-		-	
-	ṣaṇḍan	-	
-		-	Person who was born to a slut/bastard.
-	ṭi:ttam	-	
-	ṭeṇḍi	-	Transexual (A term used to look down upon trans people indicating the society only identifies the sex you are born with).
-		-	
	veppa:tti		Human feces
-		-	
	a:ḍiva:si		Beggar/ Used to indicate someone to be economically weak.

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Personal  
prostitute/ Bitch/  
Mistress.

English  
translation is  
“tribal people.”  
But the word is  
used as a  
derogatory to  
point to someone  
as “barbarian”  
(uncivilized or  
uncultured).

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**Table 2:** *Taboo words in Malayalam: evolution over time*

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#### 4.1.3 Etymology

In this section, the history of some of the taboo words will be discussed in detail. This section is an output of the interview analysis. The interview allowed the informants to interact and communicate with the researcher explaining the history of certain taboo words and their personal experiences dealing with these words.

In the interview with the informants, a female informant demonstrated her life experiences where she was always silenced by being called /ved̤i/, /ʃu:rppaṇag<sup>h</sup>a/, /aṇga:ri/, etc. when she talked against the injustice and patriarchy existing in the society. She recounted an instance where her male colleagues called her /feminiṭʃi/ for standing for her right of equal pay.

/ved̤i/ - Out of the taboo word context the term is used to mean “firecrackers.” The term started having a derogatory meaning in the context that a firecracker cracks in the presence of fire or its sole purpose is to “crack to various shapes, sizes, and colors” and hence anticipates the arrival of fire.’ A set of people who applied similar logic to the female body’s purpose is seen to crack into various shapes, sizes, and colors after the ignition of the male fire. Any female who thus shows proactive sexual desire was then termed as /ved̤i/. Nowadays the term is used to denote any outspoken female who stands against the patriarchal norms existing in society, as they are seen as females who want attention on themselves (attention from the males) and they ‘behave’ against the societal norms to ‘crack themselves with fire (male).’ These terms are now used to discourage females from standing up for their rights and questioning the misogynistic and chauvinistic society. The same is seen in the case of the term /paḍakkam/. The term also originally refers to ‘firecrackers.’

/ku:ṭṭiṭʃi/ - The term was derived from the term /ku:ṭṭa/ which means ‘drama/ play.’ The suffix /-iṭʃi/ means ‘female’ or ‘femininity’ and hence originally the term was used for females who came to perform the drama/ play. In the olden days, female performers were looked down upon and rumors were spread that they would engage in sex after the play with males that they

liked to “play” with. As time passed by, any female who is sexually active started being termed as /ku:ttit̪t̪i/.

/t̪e:vid̪it̪t̪i/ - Origin of the term is from the Tamil term /t̪e:varadj̪a:l/ which was coined from two terms /t̪e:var/ (meaning ‘God’) and /adj̪a:l/ (meaning ‘slave’), which means ‘the God’s slave.’ The term later became /t̪e:vud̪j̪a:/. These were originally a community consisting of both males and females who were selected to become God’s slaves giving them respect equal to the priests in the temple. As time went on the slaves became females doing services to God as his slave or servant and thus becoming the term /t̪e:vid̪it̪t̪i/ (the suffix /-it̪t̪i/ denotes female or femininity). As time progressed the slaves of God became sex slaves of the influential and powerful people of the temple and its locality. And then finally it derived to the present-day meaning of females with multiple sex partners/ and prostitutes.

/t̪ja:ṇḍəpott̪ə/ - The term in itself means a round mark of black pigment on the forehead at the junction of two eyebrows. The term started having its negative connotation post-release of the Malayalam movie “Chanthupottu” (2005) directed by Lal Jose, and written by Benny P. Nayarambalam. In the film, the hero Dileep is seen as a male with female mannerisms. Then any male who showed any kind of female behavior was called /t̪ja:ṇḍəpott̪ə/. As the Transwoman community started regaining their identity and establishing themselves and their rights, the term started being used against them to demean them.

/puṇḍ̪it̪t̪i/ - The term /puṇḍ̪ə/ means female genitalia/ vagina. Thus, the term refers to females interested in vaginas which means lesbians (Homosexual females). Being lesbian is looked down upon in Keralan society. As society thinks that the meaning of life is to produce the next generation, same-sex intercourse will not result in the same.

/ju:rppanag̪a/ - Named after a mythological character in Ramayana who is Ravana’s sister. The character felt attraction towards Rama who was already married to Sita. Shoorpanagha confines her love to Rama himself but is rejected by Rama. The story then continues to move forward with Rama’s brother, Lakshmana, chopping Shoorpanagha’s nose off and Shoorpanagha complaining to her brother Ravana that she attacked Sita who was protected by Lakshmana. Hence any female who is arrogant is termed as Shoorpanagha.

/af̪aṅga:ri/ - The term whose derivation is from the Sanskrit word /af̪am/ which means ‘me/myself,’ the suffix /-i/ is a female gender marker and /af̪aṅga:r/ means to be prideful in many Indian languages like for instance in Hindi. Thus the term is further used to denote any female who is prideful.

/feminit̪t̪i/ - The term derives from the English word ‘feminist.’ The term is used to indicate any female who advocates for equality in society. The term has gained a negative connotation because of the influence of the patriarchal and male-chauvinist society where females who raise their voice for their rights are looked down upon and silenced.

#### 4.1.4 Regional Variation

The survey and interview analysis draw upon the conclusion that certain terms are identified as taboo in certain regions in Kerala while in some other regions, they are not. It also shows that different regions of Kerala have diverse attitudes towards taboo terms. In certain areas, particularly in rural or informal settings, these terms may be used more colloquially and recognized as commonplace vocabulary. This implies that a language's perceived offensiveness

or acceptability is heavily influenced by cultural and regional variables. It is also to be noted that there are dialectal differences within the taboo words. Hence the same taboo words might have additions or deletions in their form due to the dialectal variation.

The following pie chart is drawn from the survey analysis, where the informants were asked if there are regional variations in taboo words in Malayalam.



\*Do you think that taboo words and their acceptance vary across different regions in Kerala? (For example, discussing bodily functions or using words related to bodily excretions might be considered highly offensive and unacceptable in some conversations. However, in some other regions, especially in rural or colloquial contexts, such words might be used more casually and accepted as part of everyday language without causing offense. For example, "നി തിട്ടാമോ തിന്നുന്നു?" //ni: ti:tt̪a:mo ti:nn̪un̪ne: (Are you eating shit?) The phrase connotes to "Do you not have sense?"

**Figure 3:** Represents a pie-chart on the acceptance of taboo words across different regions of Kerala.

The following is a list of taboo words listed by the informants in the interviews conducted that shows regional variations in taboo words.

/puṇḍamo:l/ (daughter of female genitalia) and /puṇḍamo:n/ (son of female genitalia) have been found as female and male counterparts used as taboo words in Kozhikode dialect of Malayalam. These words are used in a meaning equivalent to 'daughter of a bitch' and 'son of a bitch.' These words are found to be unfamiliar to informants unfamiliar with the Kozhikode dialect. It is found to be derived from the Tamil word /puṇḍa/ meaning 'vagina'.

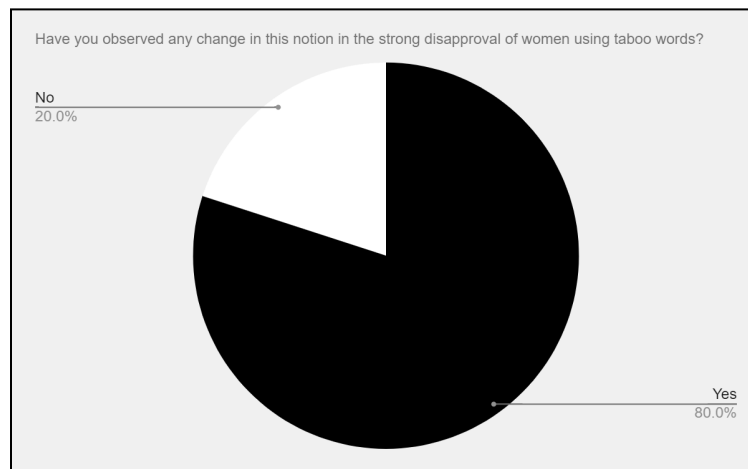
/appi/ in the Thiruvananthapuram dialect of Malayalam is used to address or call a kid or child. However, in the other regional dialects of Malayalam, the same indicates 'feces' or 'stool.'

/avara:ʈi/ is a taboo word common in the southern part of Kerala which means ‘a male who fucks anywhere’ (indiscriminately and in any location).

/ʈi:ʈam/ is seen as a taboo word which means ‘human feces.’ But the term is very commonly used colloquially and rural regions in day-to-day life lose its taboos.

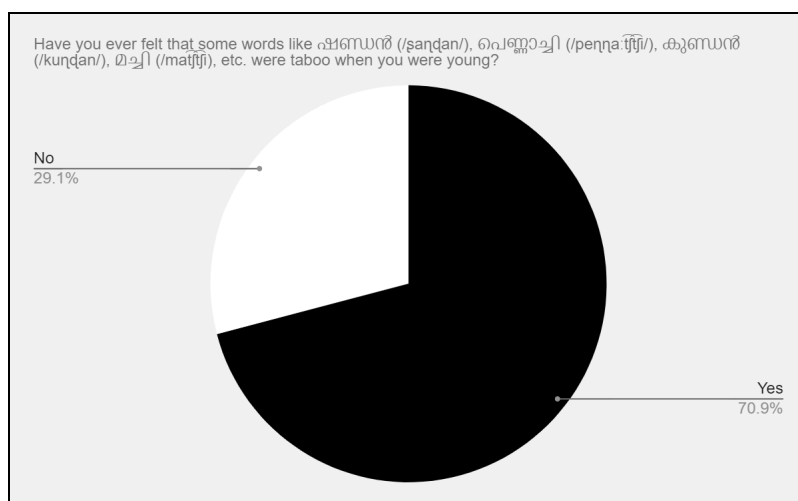
#### 4.1.5 Changing Perception of Taboo Language

According to the survey results, language is dynamic and changes with time, particularly when it comes to taboo words. The changing perspectives and language use are a reflection of larger cultural shifts, such as a heightened consciousness of gender equality and the need for language to be more inclusive and courteous. In the survey, it was found that there is a generational difference between the informants born in the 1990s and in the 2000s, in their perception of what is considered taboo and what is not. It was also observed that in the generation of 1990s, there was strong disapproval of taboo word usage by women in their growth stages while the generation 2000s observed that the disapproval was lesser for them. It is becoming less common for women to strongly disapprove of using explicit or vulgar language, and they are beginning to use phrases that are restricted in society. Although this could be interpreted as a move towards more gender equality in language use, it is important to think about how this change will affect society as a whole. Regarding whether the younger generation (those born in the 2000s) is more receptive to utilizing taboo language than the 90s generation, respondents' perspectives varied. Some people think that because of their greater exposure to the media, the younger generation is less likely to apologize for the usage of taboo words in public.



**Figure 4:** Shows a pie-chart representation of survey results on whether the informant's observed disapproval from the society when women use taboo language.



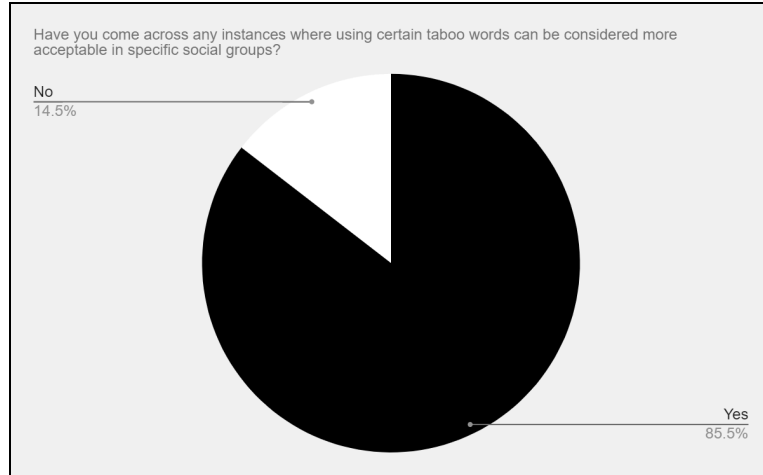


**Figure 5:** A pie-chart representation showing whether specific taboo words relating to someone's gender identity, the choice to be a househusband, sexual orientation, health issues (infertility), etc. were seen as taboo in Keralan culture in their younger days.

#### 4.1.6 Cultural and Linguistic Factors

The variables that influence the use of taboo language in different places were noted by the respondents in the survey. Social conventions, historical effects, linguistic traditions, caste and class divisions, the dynamics between urban and rural areas, religious views, media, and entertainment are some of these elements. These elements influence whether taboo language is acceptable and common in particular social circumstances and among different social groupings.

According to the respondents, taboo terms are more frequently used in private interactions, online and digital communication, and informal conversations among friends. These situations frequently permit the use of more casual language. Some respondents pointed out that the usage of taboo language may be more acceptable to some social groups than to others, including youth subcultures, LGBTQ+ communities, and people who speak regional dialects and vernaculars. It was also suggested that certain occupations like the armed forces, police, firefighters, loading workers, coolies, daily wage workers, sewage-waste workers, and sex workers use taboo words more when compared to other jobs. When employing such terminology, it's crucial to take the audience and context into account.



**Figure 6:** Pie-chart representing informants' responses to the survey questions on whether in Keralan culture usage of taboo words is acceptable in any social group.

The following table represents the informant's choices of social groups where taboo word usage is acceptable from a list of social groups provided to them. The chart gives an analysis of the frequency of occurrence of each social group.

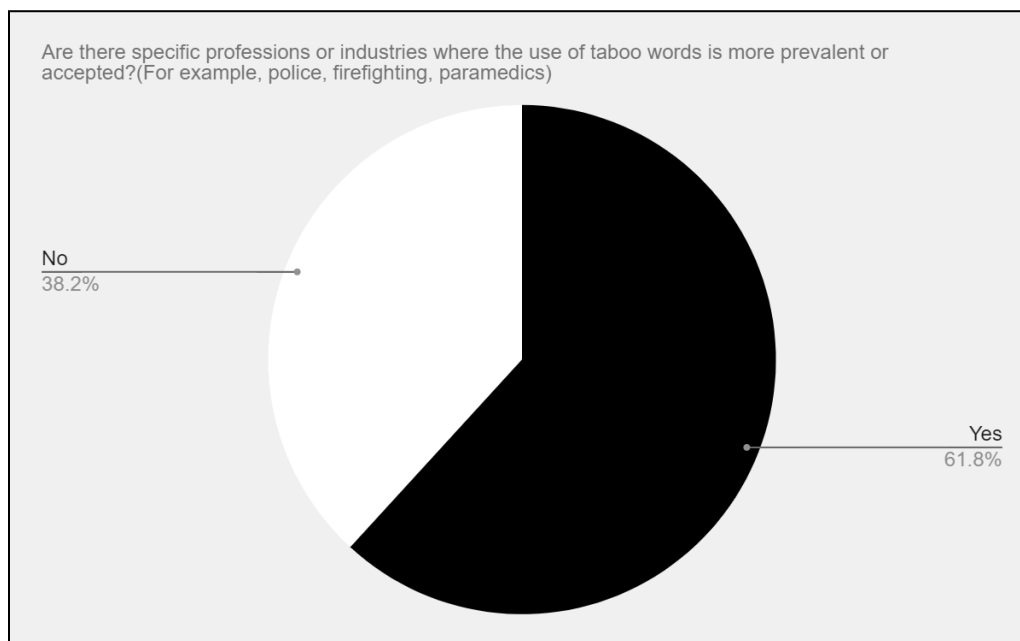
Option	Percentage
Youth Subcultures	28.93%
Local Dialects and Vernaculars	22.31%
Comedy and Satire	21.49%
Artistic and Creative Circles	11.57%
LGBTQ+ Communities	8.26%
Specific Professions or Industries	6.61%
Not Applicable	0.83%

**Table 3:** Percentage distribution of social groups where taboo words are used according

The following table represents the informant's choices of social situations where they think taboo words are likely to be used in the Malayali culture. The table shows a percentage analysis of the particular social situations.

Social Situations	Percentage
Casual Conversations Among Friends	29.41%
Online and Digital Communication	24.84%
Intimate Conversations	13.73%
Intended Verbal abuse	6.55%
Folk Performances and Local Theatre	6.54%
Traditional Festivals and Celebrations	5.88%
Fights	5.87%
Family Gatherings	3.92%
Not Applicable	2.61%

**Table 4:** Table representing the percentage distribution of different social situations where taboo words are used



**Figure 7:** Pie-chart shows whether the informants affirm (or deny) that in certain jobs (for people who engage in the job) the use of taboo words is accepted.

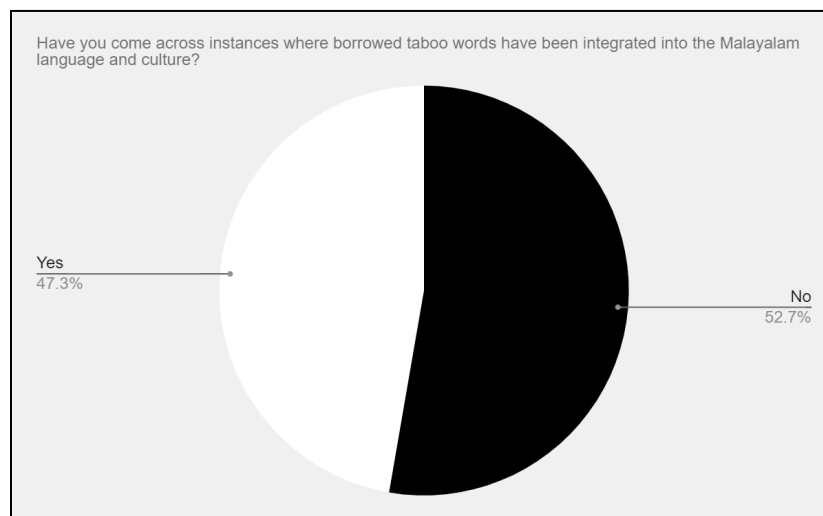
The following table list the jobs suggested by the informants where the use of taboo words is more common. The table provides the percentage of occurrence of the same item.

Professions/Industries	Percentage
Armed Forces (Army, Navy, and Air Force)	20.68%
Police	19.22%
Loading Workers/ Coolies	15.31%
Daily wage workers	13.24%
Sewage and waste collecting and cleaning workers	13.20%
Industrial or manual laborers	4.56%
Construction site workers	4.03%
Sex Workers	2.33%
Actors (Theatre and Film)	2.15%
Fire Force	1.46%
Fisherman	1.39%
Animal breeders	1.27%
Lawyers	1.16%

**Table 5:** *Percentage distribution of different jobs where taboo word usage is common*

From the Google survey analysis, several informants concurred that the adoption of taboo terms in Malayali culture had been impacted by modernization and exposure to international media. The majority of respondents agree and think that Malayalam's acceptance of foreign taboo words has been impacted by globalization. An equal distribution of participants agreed and disagreed on the idea that some foreign taboo words integrated into the Keralan culture have lost

their taboo. Respondents cited examples of taboo words that are integrated into the Malayalam language and culture.



\*Have you come across instances where borrowed taboo words have been integrated into the Malayalam language and culture? (For example, the English word "shut up." In English-speaking cultures, "shut up" is often perceived as rude or impolite, especially when used to silence or dismiss someone abruptly. However, in some Indian languages, such as Hindi, "shut up" has been borrowed and integrated into colloquial language such as "shut up karo" or "shut up ho jao." In this context, the phrase might be used more casually without carrying the same degree of offensiveness it holds in English-speaking cultures. Instead, it is often used informally to mean "be quiet" or "stop talking" without necessarily being considered impolite.)

**Figure 8:** Pie-chart showing affirmation (or denial) from the informants on whether there are any instances of borrowed taboo words in Malayalam whose degree of impoliteness was decreased in Keralan society from that of the society from whom the lexicon was borrowed.

The informants were asked in the survey to list out the various borrowed taboo words whose impoliteness is lesser than that of the society from whom it was originally borrowed. The words listed by the informants were, "fuck, asshole, shit, bullshit, hell, shut up, get lost, shut your bloody mouth, fuck off, go and die, what the fuck, toxic, bloody fool, etc."

Most of the words listed were from English. Some of the words also had Malayalam taboo words attached to them like "Fuck you myre, fuck off thaayoli, etc." Some informants did not put down the entire words and had just written the initials and filled the rest with an asterisk mark (\*), "F\*\*\* off, a\*\*, h\*\*\*, etc."

The survey analysis suggests that regarding whether it's appropriate for media and art in Kerala to use taboo words, respondents were split. They listed several things to take into account, including the language's responsibility and influence as well as context, audience, rating, censorship, and cultural sensitivity.

Following are some of the comments received in the survey for this particular question:

- Depends on what this usage aims to depict or convey. If the usage is for the purpose of depicting social norms in certain contexts and if it complements an appreciable message

that the said art or media is trying to convey then I feel its use is justified to an extent. But if it's used for the sole purpose of promoting regressive sentiments or glorifying the same, it should be condemned.

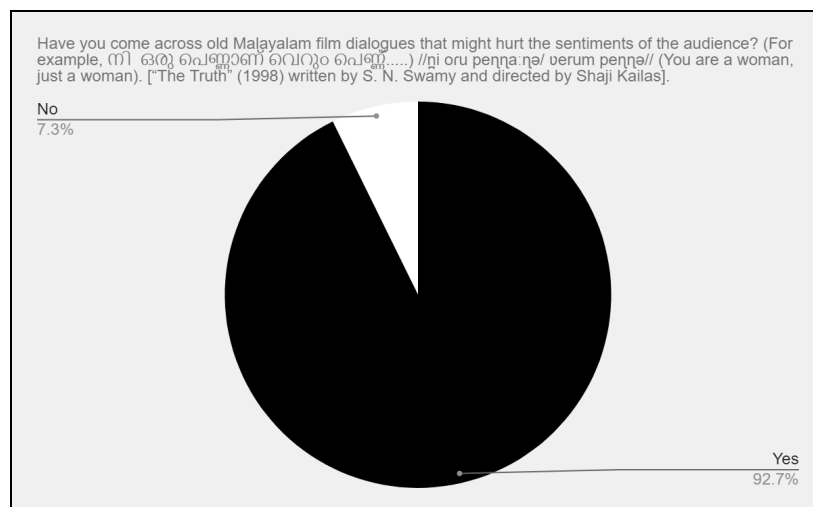
- To an extent, it has been used, but after a certain level, these are considered unacceptable and are usually censored
- Depends on the media and audience present. Children should not be exposed to such language.
- They may use it, but it also leads to the normalization of some very offensive words without proper education about how they are offensive.
- It is the person's choice.
- Depending on the words, using gender or caste-detrimental slurs in a 'cool manner' should not be shown.

The following table represents the informant's responses on the factors to be taken note of (from the list of factors provided) if art and media use taboo words. The table marks the percentage of occurrence of each factor.

Factors	Percentage
Context	32.62%
Audience	19.31%
Rating and censorship	19.31%
Responsibility and impact	16.77%
Cultural sensitivities	10.45%
An age barrier should be set as to who can see it	1.54%

**Table 6:** Table represents various factors depending on which taboo words can be integrated into art and media

Some responders pointed out that there were many taboo words especially gender-specific materials in older Malayalam movies.



\*Have you come across old Malayalam film dialogues that might hurt the sentiments of the audience? (For example, നീ ഒരു പെണ്ണാണ് വെറും പെണ്ണ്.....) //nī oru penṇa:ṇə/ verum penṇə// (You are a woman, just a woman). [“The Truth” (1998) written by S. N. Swamy and directed by Shaji Kailas].

**Figure 9:** Representation in the form of a pie chart of the informant’s affirmation (or denial) on whether they have come across any old Malayalam film dialogues that might hurt the sentiments of any audience.

In the interviews, informants argued that these were used either to demean an individual or to portray heroism. The informant conveyed that some of these dialogues were then perceived as “mass dialogue”, in the context of Southern Indian cinema it refers to a particular kind of dialogue or line spoken by a character in a movie that is intended to evoke strong feelings in the audience, especially among the actor’s fans or the movie’s fans. The main characters are supposed to feel heroic and bold from these discussions, which are frequently strong, dramatic, and emotionally charged.

For example, a lot of Malayalam “mass dialogue” of Suresh Gopi a famous Malayalam actor had the phrase, // polaja:ḍi mo:ne// [“The Tiger “(2005) directed by Shaji Kailas]. The term /polaja:ḍi mo:ne/ is a casteist slur from a scheduled caste (a term recognized by the Indian constitution for the most economically and sociologically disadvantaged group in India) in Kerala the Polaya caste.

An example of an old Malayalam song is from the old Malayalam movie “Rakkuyilin Ragasadassil” (1986) written and directed by Priyadarshan, where the hero of the movie Mammooty is seen singing for the heroine Suhasini, describing ‘how an ideal wife should be.’ One of the misogynist lines in the song is, //karmmaṭṭil ḍa:sijum/ ru:pattil lakṣmijum b̥a:rja//

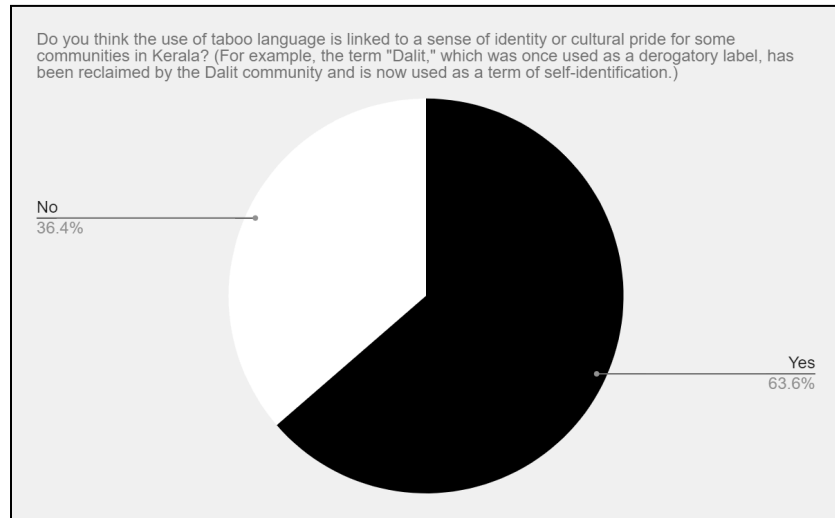
Here the phrase roughly translates that ‘a wife should be like a servant in her karma (work) and in appearance should be like Goddess Lakshmi.’ This indicates that the wife should be below her husband and should be light-skinned and beautiful.

The informants in the interviews stated that the later audiences realized the misogyny and patriarchal roots in these dialogues and songs of the older Malayalam films and this demonstrates

how society's attitudes and conventions around language use are changing and how audiences have started recognizing taboo words in society and questioning them.

The informants in the interview also stated that there is an emerging trend in the new wave of Malayalam films, where the dialogues are portrayed as how these would be used in day-to-day life situations and hence there are newer Malayalam films that use explicit taboo language in their films. One such film stated by the informants was “Churuli” a film directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery and written by S. Hareesh, which made extensive explicit usage of taboo language.

The respondents in the survey overwhelmingly concur that for certain communities in Kerala, the usage of taboo language is associated with a sense of identity or cultural pride. As with the reclaiming of titles like "Dalit," some tribes identify themselves through taboo phrases.



\*Do you think the use of taboo language is linked to a sense of identity or cultural pride for some communities in Kerala? (For example, the term "Dalit," which was once used as a derogatory label, has been reclaimed by the Dalit community and is now used as a term of self-identification.)

**Figure 10:** The informant's response in affirmation (or denial) of whether taboo language is a sense of identity to any community in Kerala.

These were further grounded in the interviews conducted where the informants conversed about the previous existence of the savarnas (upper caste/class) and avarnas (lower caste/class) in the caste and class system of Kerala and how the savarna community used the terms associated to the avarna community to indicate taboo. It was a widely accepted notion that a person was born savarna due to his meritorious deeds in their previous life and subsequently, a person was born avarna because of their bad karmas (deeds) in their past life. Thus according to the good karma of the savarna they are entitled to rule over the avarnas. Thus, identifying anyone with the names associated with the avarna community would indicate their bad karmas in their past life and the said person is to be insulted and shamed by the savarna community to help them get rid



of their past in this life so that they can get a better life in the next birth. Thus, these terms are taboo as they are insults and shames pointing towards the lower social class or caste people.

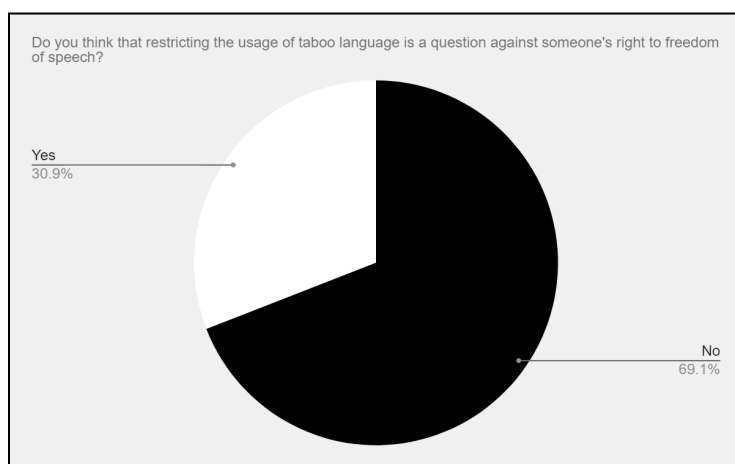
An example of this could be from the earlier stated casteist curse words in Malayalam related to the Pulaya caste, a scheduled caste (a term recognized by the Indian constitution for an identified social grouping that belongs to the most economically and

sociologically disadvantaged in India) of Kerala. There are many taboo words associated with this caste-like,

- /pela molat̪t̪i/ - An unattractive girl (Indicating people from the said caste to be unattractive).
- /pela ved̪i/ - The most demanded prostitute (Indicating the people from the caste are sex workers)
- /pela ved̪i kaṇḍaro:li/ - A whore, in a higher degree than the earlier term in derogation.

There are also other taboo words associated with the said caste which were already mentioned in Table 2. The people from the caste were oppressed earlier and were afraid to express their caste identity, which is now gradually changing. The people are now opening up and reclaiming their identity. They oppose and question the use of derogatory terms associated with their caste.

The majority of respondents in the survey do not believe that limiting the use of taboo words violates someone's right to free expression. They understand that the right to free speech must be used properly and concerning how it will affect other people. Most respondents concur that there should be limits on the use of derogatory words to maintain social harmony. This demonstrates an understanding of the diversity and cultural sensitivity in society and the fact that some words have the potential to hurt one's identity. It emphasizes how crucial it is to pay attention to regional and cultural differences in language use. The majority of respondents concur that people ought to answer for their use of derogatory words in public. This is consistent with the idea that the right to free speech should be used responsibly, taking into account the effects on other people.



**Figure 11:** Pie Chart representation of informant's affirmation (or denial) of if restriction of the taboo word is a restriction of someone's freedom of speech.

All respondents in the survey concur that schools ought to teach about taboo language and how it is used in society. This highlights the need for educational institutions to encourage polite speech, protect cultural heritage, and teach students the repercussions of using derogatory language. Most people agree that educational institutions have a responsibility to support polite language use while protecting cultural heritage. This can be accomplished by promoting multilingualism (including the various dialects of Kerala, and other regional languages of India existing in Kerala like Hindi, Kannada, Urdu, Tamil, Konkani, Tulu, etc.), adopting inclusive language policies, providing cultural sensitivity training, and having conversations. It is consistent with the notion of teaching pupils empathy and respect while honoring cultural variety.

#### 4.1.7 Origins of Taboo Words in Derogation

Results from the interview suggest that people concur that the denigration of particular subaltern communities, as we have already discussed in the case of the Polaya caste, is frequently the source of taboo phrases in Malayalam. This emphasizes how crucial it is to understand the historical background and harm that certain words can inflict. A few other examples given by the informants are as follows:

- /tʃaṇḍaːlan/ - The term refers to a class of tribals who worked for the upper caste (savarna). Later on, it became a common slur for all lower caste (avarna) people of Kerala.
- /koʃavan/ - It was the caste name for the potter community in Kerala. The term was later used with the meaning of ‘fool.’
- /parajatʃi/ - Were women belonging to the Paraya community in Kerala, an untouchable community. Today the term is used for ‘any shabby-looking females.’ Some even use it as a means of insulting women with curly hair and dark skin.
- /koːran/ - The term in itself is just a name that is used in male gender. The name was particularly used by our ancestors who belonged to the avarna community, later the savarna community started using the term for any person belonging to the oppressed class, whether their name is /koːran/ (കോറൻ Koran) or not. The name thus became an identity marker of the avarna community and later the taboo of anyone who is addressed as Koran is to demean their identity and existence.
- /aːɖivaːsi/ - The term originates from Sanskrit words /aːɖi/ meaning “earliest” and /vaːsi/ meaning “inhabitant.” Members of any aboriginal people of India. It gained its derogatory meaning to portray that these people are “uncivilized and uncultured.”

### 5. Discussion

Most respondents think that in Keralan society, taboo words in Malayalam are gender-specific. Men use taboo words more frequently and their usage is more acceptable in society. Some responders have noticed a shift in this idea, pointing out that women are beginning to use taboo phrases in society and that there is a lessened severe stain in their reputation for using specific explicit or obscene language. Many responders brought up Malayalam insults that were gender-specific. These are offensive terms that are used to disparage or offend individuals based on their gender. Some respondents pointed out that most of these taboos have no male equivalents, demonstrating a gender disparity in the usage of such offensive language. A few males who responded referred to derogatory remarks about male sexuality, such as accusations of homosexuality.

The vast majority of respondents concur that linguistic and cultural variables affect how taboo language is used in various contexts. The reasons given by respondents for the usage of taboo language in various locales include social standards, linguistic traditions, caste and class, and historical effects. According to the respondents, taboo terms are more frequently used in intimate chats, informal conversations between friends, online and digital communication, local theatrical and folk performances, traditional festivals and festivities, and some particular professions (for instance, the police, army, etc.) or industries (such as theatre, film, etc.). Certain social groups—youth subcultures, LGBTQ+ communities, and artistic and creative circles, for example—acknowledge that taboo language is more acceptable in these contexts.

The majority of respondents concur that taboo phrases have become more accepted in Malayali culture as a result of modernity and exposure to international media. They point out that these terms have become more widely known thanks to films and digital media. Respondents are split regarding whether the "2k" generation—those born after 2000—is more receptive to utilizing taboo language than the 1990s generation. Some people think that because they've had more exposure to the media, the younger generation is less likely to apologize for it in public. The majority of respondents concur that taboo language should be used in art and media, but there should be some thought given to factors like audience, rating, context, and censorship. They stress that the use shouldn't do harm to people or encourage outdated beliefs.

Respondents mentioned that the usage of taboo language in older Malayalam films could upset the contemporary audience's feelings. There is a broad spectrum of viewpoints regarding the usage of taboo language in the responses. Diverse viewpoints on the subject are evident from the fact that some respondents strongly agree with particular claims while others do not. When employing taboo language, especially in art and media, many responses emphasize the significance of taking cultural sensitivities, accountability, and impact into account. Most responses emphasize the importance of context when utilizing language that is considered taboo. They contend that the context and goal determine whether or not such language is suitable. Many responders support media restriction and rating to make sure that sensitive content is properly controlled.

In conclusion, the results and arguments show that taboo language in Keralan society is an intricate problem with a distinct set of dynamics. Keralan society has unique characteristics such as the specific caste groups in Kerala, the migrated workers living in the state, the savarna and avarna caste relations that existed in the society, unique customs and culture, etc.

An example of a festival where taboo language is being employed is the 'Kodungallur Bharani festival' which is famous for its "Bharani pattu", a ballad consisting of explicit usage of the taboo language, where the devotees of the goddess Bhadrakali sing lyrics that defame the goddess. A line from one of the song in "Kodungallur Bharani Pattu (Kodungallur Bharani Song) starts like: //koḍuṅṅallu:rammaje paṇṇaṇameṅkil/ koḍimaram po:loru kuṇṇa ve:ṇam//. The translation of which is, "to fuck Goddess of Kodungalloor, one needs to have a flag-mast sized penis."

There are influences of sociolinguistic factors, gender norms, generational shifts, and regional diversity, though it has many similarities with many other cultures. These unique characteristics help to distinguish taboo language from more general societal trends and foster a more nuanced understanding of it within the Keralan context.

Though most people concur that media exposure and modernization have made taboo language more acceptable, there are differences between generations' viewpoints. These results demonstrate how language norms are dynamic and how conversations about language usage restrictions are always necessary, especially in the arts and media. Future studies should look at how media and technology are changing the way that language norms are formed and how shifting cultural views are affecting language use. Further studies can also explore more regional and social dialects of Kerala, various customs, traditions, and festivals focusing more on the tribal culture in Kerala.

## 6. Conclusion

This study has examined the various viewpoints and factors that influence the use of taboo language in Keralan society in an effort to better understand its intricacies. The results draw attention to a number of significant patterns and subtleties that advance our knowledge of taboo language usage in Kerala's distinct sociolinguistic and cultural setting.

In summary, the study sheds light on taboo language as a complex phenomenon that is deeply woven into Keralan culture. It provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of taboo language, which are influenced by sociolinguistic factors, gender norms, generational transitions, and geographical differences.

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## Exploring Mathematical Sciences in the Context of Urdu Language and Culture

Bondu Raju<sup>1</sup>

*College of Teacher Education (MANUU), Karnataka*

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### ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the intersection of mathematical sciences with the Urdu language and its cultural context. Despite being primarily a language of literature and poetry, Urdu holds a unique position in the realm of mathematical discourse due to its historical significance, linguistic richness, and cultural influences. Through an interdisciplinary approach, this paper delves into various aspects where Urdu intertwines with mathematical concepts, including its role in mathematical education, the development of mathematical terminology, and its representation in mathematical literature. Furthermore, it explores the challenges and opportunities in promoting mathematical sciences within Urdu-speaking communities, aiming to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of mathematics within this cultural framework.

## 1. Introduction

The study explores the complex relationship between mathematics and the Urdu language, exploring historical, educational, linguistic, and cultural dimensions. Despite Urdu's renowned literary heritage, its role in mathematical discourse remains underexplored. The research traces Urdu's evolution as a language of scholarship, investigates challenges in teaching mathematics in Urdu-medium schools, and examines the translation and adaptation of mathematical terminology into Urdu. Additionally, it uncovers mathematical themes in Urdu literature and societal attitudes towards mathematics within Urdu-speaking communities. Through interdisciplinary inquiry, the study aims to promote mathematical literacy within Urdu-speaking populations and foster collaboration between mathematicians, linguists, educators, and cultural custodians. Ultimately, it seeks to enrich mathematical discourse by embracing linguistic and cultural diversity (Bishop, 2019).

### 1.1 Background and Significance

The study explores the intricate relationship between mathematics and the Urdu language, emphasizing their mutual influence on accessibility, interpretation, and application of mathematical concepts. Urdu, deeply rooted in cultural heritage and linguistic diversity, intersects with mathematics in a compelling manner. Despite Urdu's historical contributions to literature and art, its engagement with mathematical sciences remains under-explored.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [bondu.raju@gmail.com](mailto:bondu.raju@gmail.com)

Investigating this relationship not only enriches both fields but also promotes inclusivity within mathematical discourse.

By tracing Urdu's evolution as a language of intellectual exchange and addressing challenges in promoting mathematical education in Urdu, the study aims to ensure that mathematical knowledge transcends linguistic barriers. Standardizing mathematical terminology in Urdu and integrating mathematical ideas into Urdu literature enhance both linguistic richness and mathematical engagement among Urdu-speaking communities.

Furthermore, exploring the representation of mathematical concepts in Urdu literature highlights the symbiotic relationship between mathematics and culture, fostering interdisciplinary connections. This inquiry promotes cross-cultural dialogue, interdisciplinary collaborations, and mathematical literacy, contributing to a more inclusive society where mathematics transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries, enriching human experience and advancing collective knowledge.

### *1.2 Objectives of the Study*

- To Explore the Historical Evolution: Investigate the historical development of Urdu language and its role as a medium of intellectual exchange, focusing on the contributions of Urdu-speaking regions to the field of mathematics.
- To Assess Mathematical Education in Urdu: Evaluate the availability and quality of mathematical education resources in Urdu, identify challenges faced in teaching mathematics in Urdu-medium schools, and explore initiatives aimed at promoting mathematical literacy within Urdu-speaking communities.
- To Examine the Development of Mathematical Terminology: Analyse the translation and adaptation of mathematical terminology into Urdu, assess the standardization efforts and challenges in developing a coherent and accessible mathematical vocabulary in Urdu.
- To Investigate Representation in Mathematical Literature: Explore the representation of mathematical concepts within Urdu literature, including poetry, prose, and artistic expressions, highlighting the cultural and aesthetic dimensions of mathematical discourse in Urdu.
- To Explore Cultural Perspectives: Examine societal attitudes towards mathematics within Urdu-speaking communities, investigate cultural influences on mathematical problem-solving approaches, and identify the role of mathematics in shaping Urdu arts, crafts, and cultural practices.
- To Propose Strategies for Enhancement: Identify challenges and opportunities in promoting mathematical literacy within Urdu-speaking populations, propose strategies for enhancing mathematical education and resources in Urdu, and recommend collaborative efforts to bridge the gap between mathematics, language, and culture.

By addressing these objectives, this study aims to foster a deeper understanding of the interplay between mathematical sciences and Urdu language, enriching mathematical discourse, promoting cultural inclusivity, and advancing educational equity (*Nasir, 2016*) within diverse linguistic and cultural contexts.



## 2. Historical Perspective

### 2.1 *Origin and Evolution of Urdu Language*

The Urdu language, originating in the 13th century, amalgamated Persian, Arabic, and indigenous languages of the Indian subcontinent. During the Delhi Sultanate, Persian influence shaped its vocabulary and literary conventions, while Arabic contributed religious and scientific terms. Indigenous languages added colloquial expressions and cultural nuances.

Under the Mughal Empire, Urdu flourished as a language of literature and art, supported by emperors like Akbar and Shah Jahan. Colonial rule further elevated Urdu's status, making it a lingua franca and a tool for political discourse during the Indian independence movement (Rahman, 2007).

After the partition of India in 1947, Urdu became Pakistan's national language but faced challenges in India where Hindi dominated. Despite this, Urdu thrives globally, with diaspora communities across continents. Its evolution reflects the interplay of tradition and modernity, making it a testament to the resilience of linguistic diversity in the contemporary world (Husain, 1953).

### 2.2 *Influence of Persian and Arabic on Urdu Mathematical Terminology*

The historical interaction between Urdu and Persian and Arabic languages has significantly influenced the development of mathematical terminology in the Indian subcontinent.

#### 2.2.1 Persian Influence

Persian literature significantly influenced Urdu mathematical terminology, especially during Delhi Sultanate and Mughal periods, with Persian scholars and mathematicians borrowing many terms and concepts.

Examples of mathematical terms of Persian origin include:

- "Riazi" (ریاضی) for "mathematics"
- "Hisab" (حساب) for "calculation"
- "Shumar" (شمار) for "counting"
- "Adad" (عدد) for "number"

#### 2.2.2 Arabic Influence

Arabic, the language of Islamic scholarship, significantly influenced Urdu's mathematical terminology, particularly in algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, owing to its close ties with Indian scholars.

Examples of mathematical terms of Arabic origin include:

- "Algebra" (الجبر) for "algebra"
- "Geometry" (هندسه) for "geometry"
- "Hisab al-jabr wa'l-muqabala" (حساب الجبر و المقابله) for "algebraic calculation"
- "Juz" (جزء) for "fraction"

Urdu's mathematical terminology, derived from Persian and Arabic, has been standardized and adapted to suit Urdu language rules, aiming to create a coherent and accessible vocabulary.

### 2.2.3 Notable mathematicians and scholars in Urdu-speaking regions

The summarized text highlights the contributions of notable mathematicians and scholars from Urdu-speaking regions:

**Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi (c. 780-850 CE):** Al-Khwarizmi's pioneering work in algebra, particularly his treatise "*Al-Kitab al-Mukhtasar fi Hisab al-Jabr wa'l-Muqabala*," laid the groundwork for algebraic notation and problem-solving methods (*Al-Khwarizmi, c. 820*). His name "Al-Khwarizmi" is the origin of the term "algorithm."

**Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi (1207-1274 CE):** A prominent mathematician and philosopher, al-Qunawi's contributions to various branches of mathematics, including algebra, geometry, and arithmetic, influenced the development of mathematical thought in Urdu-speaking regions (*Al-Qunawi, 1274*).

**Mir Muhammad Hussain Tabatabai (1800-1850 CE):** Tabatabai, a Persian scholar residing in India during British colonial rule, authored treatises on algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, contributing significantly to the dissemination of mathematical knowledge in Urdu-speaking communities (*Tabatabai, 1850*).

**Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898 CE):** A renowned scholar and reformer, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan played a crucial role in promoting modern education, including mathematics, among Urdu-speaking Muslims in British India (*Khan, 1898*). He founded educational institutions where mathematics was taught alongside other subjects.

**Abdul Majid Qureshi (1909-1984 CE):** Qureshi, a Pakistani mathematician and educator, focused on promoting mathematical literacy and critical thinking skills among students through his textbooks and academic papers (*Qureshi, 1984*).

**Salimuzzaman Siddiqui (1897-1994 CE):** While primarily known as a chemist, Siddiqui also made contributions to mathematics during his academic career (*Siddiqui, 1994*). He was involved in establishing scientific institutions in Pakistan, where mathematics played a crucial role in research and development.

These individuals have left a lasting legacy in mathematics, advancing the field and promoting its dissemination within Urdu-speaking communities and beyond. Their works serve as a testament to the intellectual richness and diversity of Urdu-speaking cultures.

## 3. Mathematical Education in Urdu

### 3.1 Availability of mathematical literature in Urdu

Mathematical literature in Urdu includes textbooks, research papers, and popular science books, promoting mathematical literacy and knowledge within Urdu-speaking communities, influenced by regional availability and educational settings.

#### 3.1.1 Textbooks and Educational Resources

Urdu-speaking regions, especially Pakistan and India, have a vast collection of textbooks and educational materials covering various branches of mathematics, developed by educational boards, universities, and private publishers.

#### 3.1.2 Translated Works

Classic mathematics works translated into Urdu, including those by renowned mathematicians, cover topics like algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus, making them accessible to Urdu-speaking readers.

### 3.1.3 Research Journals and Publications

Urdu-language mathematics research journals enable scholars, researchers, and educators to share findings, ideas, and engage in scholarly discourse, contributing to the advancement of mathematical knowledge in Urdu-speaking academia.

### 3.1.4 Online Resources and Digital Libraries

Digital technology has created online resources and libraries, showcasing a vast collection of Urdu mathematical literature, allowing learners to supplement their studies and engage with concepts dynamically.

### 3.1.5 Educational Initiatives and Outreach Programs

Educational initiatives and outreach programs aim to enhance mathematical literacy and awareness among Urdu-speaking communities through workshops, seminars, and collaborations between academic institutions and community organizations.

The expansion of mathematical literature in Urdu faces challenges like terminology standardization, educational material quality, and technology integration, but addressing these can enhance mathematical literacy and foster innovation.

## 3.2 *Challenges in teaching mathematics in Urdu-medium schools*

### 3.2.1 Lack of Quality Educational Materials

Urdu-medium schools struggle with a lack of high-quality educational materials for teaching Urdu mathematics, affecting effective learning experiences and curriculum alignment.

### 3.2.2 Translation and Adaptation Issues

Translating mathematical concepts from English to Urdu presents challenges in clarity, accuracy, and consistency, necessitating specialized expertise to ensure accessibility and comprehensibility for students.

### 3.2.3 Limited Teacher Training and Professional Development

Urdu-medium school teachers may lack proper training and professional development, leading to instructional gaps and inconsistencies in classroom practice due to lack of formal training.

### 3.2.4 Cultural Perceptions of Mathematics

Cultural attitudes towards mathematics in Urdu-speaking communities can hinder teaching and learning, as negative perceptions can affect student motivation and engagement in Urdu-medium schools.

### 3.2.5 Technological and Infrastructure Constraints

Urdu-medium schools often struggle to integrate multimedia resources and digital learning strategies into their mathematics instruction due to technological and infrastructure constraints.

### 3.2.6 Language Switching in Higher Education

Urdu-medium schools may transition to English-medium instruction in higher education, causing challenges for students, potentially impacting their mathematical comprehension and academic performance.

### 3.2.7 Assessment and Evaluation Practices

Traditional assessment methods in Urdu-medium schools may not accurately measure students' mathematical understanding and problem-solving abilities, leading to inaccuracies in learning outcomes and academic achievement.

Educators, policymakers, curriculum developers, and stakeholders must collaborate to develop solutions, professional development opportunities, and supportive learning environments for Urdu-medium schools to improve mathematics education.

### 3.3 *Initiatives for promoting mathematical education in Urdu*

#### 3.3.1 Development of High-Quality Educational Materials

Collaborate with educators, mathematicians, and language experts to create high-quality Urdu-language educational materials, aligning with curriculum, culturally relevant, and utilizing clear language for better comprehension.

#### 3.3.2 Teacher Training and Professional Development

Implement teacher training programs for effective Urdu-medium mathematics teaching, offering workshops, seminars, and online courses on pedagogy, language proficiency, translation techniques, and instructional strategies.

#### 3.3.3 Curriculum Enhancement and Adaptation

Enhance the mathematics curriculum to incorporate Urdu-based concepts, terminology, and examples, ensuring flexibility, dynamicity, and alignment with academic standards and learning objectives for diverse students.

#### 3.3.4 Integration of Technology

Utilize technology to improve Urdu-medium schools' mathematics instruction by offering digital resources, interactive learning tools, multimedia materials, online tutorials, and mobile applications for dynamic engagement.

#### 3.3.5 Community Engagement and Outreach

Promoting mathematical literacy and awareness in Urdu-speaking communities through partnerships, fairs, competitions, and outreach events, fostering collaborations between schools, universities, and industry stakeholders.

#### 3.3.6 Parental Involvement and Support

Encourage parental involvement in children's Urdu mathematical education through resources, workshops, and informational sessions, fostering a supportive learning environment that values and promotes mathematical achievement.

#### 3.3.7 Research and Evaluation

To evaluate the effectiveness of mathematical education initiatives in Urdu, gather feedback from stakeholders, and refine strategies for continuous improvement.

## 4. Development of Mathematical Terminology

### 4.1 *Translation of mathematical terms into Urdu*

- |                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Mathematics - ریاضیات (Riyaziyyat) | 11. Fraction - فرائشن (Fraction) |
| 2. Arithmetic - حساب (Hisab)          | 12. Ratio - نسبت (Nisbat)        |
| 3. Algebra - جبر (Jabr)               | 13. Decimal - دسمی (Dasmi)       |
| 4. Geometry - ہندسہ (Handasah)        | 14. Exponent - طاقت (Taaqat)     |
| 5. Calculus - احتساب (Ihtisab)        | 15. Sum - مجموعہ (Majmu'ah)      |
| 6. Trigonometry - مثلثات (Musallasat) | 16. Product - ضرب (Zarb)         |
| 7. Equation - مساویت (Musaawiyat)     | 17. Division - تقسیم (Taqseem)   |
| 8. Function - تفاعل (Tafaeel)         | 18. Square - مربع (Murabba)      |
| 9. Variable - متغیر (Mutaghayyar)     | 19. Triangle - مثلث (Musallas)   |

## 10. Constant - مستقل (Mustaqil)

## 20. Circle - دائره (Daira)

The translations serve as a foundation for developing mathematical terminology in Urdu, which can be utilized in educational materials, textbooks, and instructional resources for Urdu-medium schools.

4.2 *Adaptation of Urdu script for mathematical symbols*

Urdu script can be adapted for mathematical symbols, ensuring clarity, consistency, and readability by using Urdu characters for commonly used symbols.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Plus (+) - اضافہ (Izafah)                 | 9. Fraction (1/2, 3/4, etc.) - فرائشن (Fraction) |
| 2. Minus (-) - منفی (Manfi)                  | 10. Percent (%) - فیصد (Fisad)                   |
| 3. Multiplication (×) - ضرب (Zarb)           | 11. Degree (°) - درجہ (Darjah)                   |
| 4. Division (÷) - تقسیم (Taaseem)            | 12. Pi (π) - پائی (Pai)                          |
| 5. Equals (=) - برابر (Barabar)              | 13. Infinity (∞) - لامتناہی (Lamhatnahi)         |
| 6. Greater than (>) - زیادہ (Zyada)          | 14. Summation (Σ) - مجموعہ (Majmu'ah)            |
| 7. Less than (<) - کم (Kam)                  | 15. Integral (∫) - تکمیل (Takmeel)               |
| 8. Square root (√) - مربع جذر (Murabba Jazr) |  |

The adaptations aim to make mathematical notation accessible to Urdu speakers by using familiar Urdu characters and standardizing them across educational materials for clarity.

4.3 *Standardization and challenges in Urdu mathematical terminology*

Standardizing mathematical terminology in Urdu faces challenges due to the language's historical evolution, diverse linguistic influences, and maintaining clarity and precision in mathematical communication.

## 4.3.1 Linguistic Diversity

Urdu, a linguistic mix of Persian, Arabic, and indigenous languages, requires standardizing terminology to maintain consistency and coherence across different Urdu-speaking regions (Leung, 2015).

## 4.3.2 Translation Accuracy

Translating mathematical terms from English, Persian, or Arabic into Urdu can be challenging due to lack of direct equivalents, requiring creative adaptations or new coinages.

## 4.3.3 Technical Precision

Standardizing Urdu mathematical terminology requires precise and specific language to accurately convey concepts and operations while remaining accessible and comprehensible to students and educators.

## 4.3.4 Educational Context

Standardized mathematical terminology should be tailored to the target audience's educational context and proficiency level, balancing linguistic simplicity and complexity to cater to diverse learning needs.

## 4.3.5 Integration of New Concepts

Collaboration between mathematicians, educators, linguists, and policymakers is needed to standardize Urdu mathematical terminology to accommodate emerging concepts and knowledge.

## 4.3.6 Cultural Sensitivity

Standardizing mathematical terminology for Urdu-speaking communities involves considering cultural nuances and preferences to enhance engagement and understanding of mathematical concepts.

## 5. Representation in Mathematical Literature

### 5.1 *Mathematical concepts in Urdu poetry and prose*

Urdu poetry and prose frequently use mathematical concepts, symbols, and metaphors to convey abstract ideas, philosophical reflections, and aesthetic beauty.

#### 5.1.1 Geometry and Symmetry (*Allama Iqbal*)

- Poet: Allama Iqbal

- Verse: "ہم کو معلوم ہے جنت کی حقیقت لیکن، دل کے خوابوں کو پراکتوں کا حساب لیکن"

- Translation: "We know the reality of paradise, but we count the dreams of the heart with protractors"

#### 5.1.2 Infinity and Limitlessness (*Faiz Ahmed Faiz*)

- Poet: Faiz Ahmed Faiz

- Verse: "محببتوں میں ہوتی ہیں کتنی کوساں، دل چاہے بے حساب ہو جائے"

- Translation: "How many infinite distances lie within love, the heart desires to become boundless"

#### 5.1.3 Patterns and Sequences (*Mirza Ghalib*)

- Poet: Mirza Ghalib

- Verse: "چھپ گیا جو ستاروں کی تعداد میں، ایک نیا سال لیکر آیا ہوں"

- Translation: "When hidden in the count of stars, I bring a new year"

#### 5.1.4 Harmony and Proportion (*Parveen Shakir*)

- Poet: Parveen Shakir

- Verse: "ہر چیز کا وقت اور مقام ہوتا ہے، اور خوابوں کے گیت بھی"

- Translation: "Everything has its time and place, even the melodies of dreams"

#### 5.1.5 Equilibrium and Balance (*Jaun Elia*)

- Poet: Jaun Elia

- Verse: "زندگی کی راہوں میں کبھی ایک بار، تقاضہ تھا کہ تکمیل کی خواہش ہو"

- Translation: "Once in the paths of life, there was a demand for the desire of completion"

Urdu poetry and prose effectively use mathematical concepts and imagery to evoke emotions, stimulate thought, and explore existence's mysteries, highlighting the interconnectedness of mathematics, language, and art.

### 5.2 *Mathematical puzzles and riddles in Urdu literature*

Mathematical puzzles and riddles are a common theme in Urdu literature, providing intellectual challenges and stimulating readers' imagination.

#### 5.2.1 Riddles (پہیلیاں)

- "آٹھ بچوں کے کتنے ہوتے ہیں؟"

(How many are the sons of eight?)

Answer: کے ساتھ ساتھ آٹھ بچے بھی ہوتے ہیں۔ (eight) ہشت

- "کونسی چیز وہ ہے جو دس ہو کر بھی صفر ہوتی ہے؟"

(What is that thing which remains zero even when it becomes ten?)

Answer: کہالہ

### 5.2.2 Mathematical Fossils (ریاضیاتی پتھر)

"سوال: اگر آپ کے پاس 5 اپلز ہیں اور آپ نے ان کو 3 دوستوں میں بانٹا ہوا ہے، تو 5 اپلز کا کیا کرنا ہے؟"

(Question: If you have 5 apples and you have divided them among 3 friends, what should you do with the 5 apples?)

اگر آپ کو آپ کے پاس 5 اپلز ہوں تو اس کا کوئی کام نہیں کرنا چاہئے کیونکہ آپ نے پہلے ہی ان کو اپنے دوستوں میں بانٹ دیا ہے۔

سوال: اگر آپ کے پاس ایک مکالماتی پرانہ ہے اور آپ نے اسے 3 ٹکڑوں میں کاٹ دیا ہے، تو آپ کو اسے "سمجھانے کے لئے کیا کرنا ہوگا؟"

(Question: If you have a puzzle and you have divided it into 3 pieces, what do you need to do to understand it?)

اسے پہلے سے ہی سمجھنے کی کوشش کریں۔

The examples showcase how mathematical puzzles and riddles are utilized in Urdu literature to engage and challenge readers, allowing them to uncover the mysteries within poetic and prose works.

## 5.3 Impact of Urdu literature on mathematical thought

### 5.3.1 Metaphorical Expression

Urdu poetry and prose use metaphors, allegories, and symbolic imagery to explore abstract ideas, including mathematical concepts, making them more accessible and relatable to readers.

### 5.3.2 Cultural Relevance

Urdu literature integrates mathematical concepts into everyday life, folklore, and historical narratives, fostering appreciation for mathematics as a vital part of cultural identity and human experience.

### 5.3.3 Intellectual Engagement

Urdu literature, rich in mathematical puzzles, riddles, and anecdotes, stimulates intellectual curiosity and problem-solving skills through wordplay, irony, and humour, encouraging readers to explore and unravel mysteries.

### 5.3.4 Interdisciplinary Connections

Urdu literature integrates mathematics, science, philosophy, and spirituality, fostering interdisciplinary connections and promoting a holistic understanding of mathematics through dialogue and collaboration among scholars and educators.

### 5.3.5 Educational Inspiration

Urdu literature inspires educators, mathematicians, and students by integrating mathematical themes and concepts. Incorporating poetry, stories, and literary excerpts in mathematics instruction boosts engagement and motivation.

Urdu literature significantly influences mathematical thought by bridging disciplinary boundaries, fostering cultural connections, and inspiring intellectual curiosity, thereby enriching human experiences and advancing collective knowledge across diverse contexts.

## 6. Cultural Perspectives

Cultural, social, and educational factors influence attitudes towards mathematics in Urdu-speaking communities, influencing its importance in daily life and shaping perceptions of the subject.

### 6.1 Perception of mathematics within Urdu-speaking communities

The perception of mathematics in Urdu-speaking communities is shaped by a multifaceted blend of cultural, social, and educational factors.

#### 6.1.1 Utility and Practicality

Urdu-speaking communities value mathematics as a practical and utilitarian subject, essential for everyday tasks like budgeting, financial management, and problem-solving in various professions like engineering, finance, and technology.

#### 6.1.2 Academic Importance

Urdu-speaking communities prioritize academic achievement, recognizing mathematics as a core subject in school curricula. Parents, educators, and policymakers set high standards for mathematical proficiency among students.

#### 6.1.3 Challenges and Difficulties

Urdu-speaking communities often view mathematics as challenging and intimidating due to negative experiences like difficulty understanding concepts, fear of failure, and lack of confidence.

#### 6.1.4 Cultural Stereotypes

Cultural stereotypes and societal perceptions of mathematics as a "hard" or "nerdy" subject can influence attitudes towards mathematics within Urdu-speaking communities. These stereotypes may discourage some individuals from pursuing mathematics-related careers or activities, perpetuating a perception of mathematics as inaccessible or uninteresting.

#### 6.1.5 Cultural Significance

Mathematics holds cultural significance in Urdu-speaking communities, reflected in traditional art, architecture, music, and poetry, with geometric designs in Islamic art and numerical symbolism in Sufi poetry.

#### 6.1.6 Educational Opportunities

Urdu-speaking communities face disparities in quality mathematics education due to limited resources, infrastructure, and advanced study opportunities, affecting mathematical learning and achievement among marginalized communities.

### 6.2 *Cultural influences on mathematical problem-solving*

Cultural mathematical problem-solving involves integrating cultural contexts, traditions, and symbols into mathematical scenarios, allowing students to engage with mathematics in familiar and meaningful ways.

#### 6.2.1 Islamic Geometric Patterns

Students learn to identify mathematical principles underlying geometric patterns in Islamic art and architecture, and use these principles to create their own geometric designs.

#### 6.2.2 Traditional Festivals and Celebrations

Students explore mathematical concepts in cultural festivals like Eid-ul-Fitr and Diwali, solving problems related to counting, probability, and geometry, incorporating elements of traditions and customs.

#### 6.2.3 Cultural Proverbs and Sayings



Students explore mathematical concepts in cultural narratives through riddles, puzzles, and brainteasers, focusing on logic, reasoning, and deduction through traditional stories and sayings.

#### 6.2.4 Historical Contexts and Figures

Students explore historical mathematical problems, examining contributions of mathematicians, astronomers, and scientists, solving problems related to historical figures like Al-Khwarizmi, Ibn al-Haytham, and Aryabhata.

#### 6.2.5 Cultural Artifacts and Artefacts

Students study mathematical concepts in cultural artifacts like coins, pottery, and textiles, analysing patterns, shapes, and measurements to interpret their significance using mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills.

Educators can foster cultural appreciation and pride in their heritage by incorporating cultural contexts into mathematical problem-solving, enhancing students' skills and knowledge.

### 6.3 *Role of mathematics in Urdu arts and crafts*

Mathematics significantly influences Urdu arts and crafts by utilizing principles and techniques to create intricate designs, patterns, and geometrical motifs.

#### 6.3.1 Geometric Patterns in Calligraphy

Urdu calligraphy uses geometric patterns inspired by mathematical principles to create harmonious compositions and balanced layouts, relying on mathematical precision for letter and motif proportions and symmetry.

#### 6.3.2 Tessellations in Tilework

Tilework, found in Urdu-speaking buildings, uses tessellations to create intricate geometric designs, including star patterns, arabesques, and floral motifs, utilizing symmetry and transformation geometry.

#### 6.3.3 Symmetry in Woodwork and Inlay

Woodwork and inlay techniques in traditional furniture and decorative items use mathematical principles of symmetry and proportion to create symmetrical patterns and motifs.

#### 6.3.4 Pattern Design in Textiles

Urdu textiles showcase intricate geometric patterns, incorporating mathematical concepts like repetition, symmetry, and scaling to reflect cultural heritage and artistic traditions.

#### 6.3.5 Mosaic Art in Architecture

Mosaic art, a popular form of interior decoration in Urdu architecture, uses mathematical principles like proportion, symmetry, and tessellation to create intricate patterns and images.

Urdu artisans use mathematical concepts in arts and crafts to create visually stunning masterpieces, showcasing harmony and beauty of mathematical patterns, and deepening appreciation of cultural heritage and traditions.

## 7. Future Directions and Recommendations

Promoting mathematical literacy in Urdu-speaking communities requires a comprehensive approach that considers cultural, educational, and socio-economic factors. Strategies include:

## 7.1 *Strategies for enhancing mathematical literacy in Urdu-speaking populations*

### 7.1.1 Community Engagement and Outreach

Engage community leaders, organizations, and stakeholders to promote mathematical literacy through workshops, seminars, and public events, highlighting practical applications in various professions and sectors.

### 7.1.2 Cultural Relevance in Education

Incorporating cultural contexts, traditions, and symbols into mathematics education curricula to make concepts more relatable and accessible to Urdu-speaking students.

### 7.1.3 Teacher Training and Professional Development

The initiative offers training and professional development opportunities for Urdu-speaking mathematics educators, focusing on culturally responsive pedagogy, language proficiency, and inclusive teaching practices (Greer, 2009).

### 7.1.4 Digital and Multimedia Resources

Utilize digital technology and multimedia resources to improve Urdu-speaking students' mathematical learning experiences through interactive platforms, mobile applications, and online tutorials.

### 7.1.5 Parental Involvement and Support

Encourage parents to support their children's mathematical education through resources, workshops, and activities, reinforcing concepts and problem-solving strategies in Urdu.

### 7.1.6 Cross-disciplinary Collaborations

Collaborate with educators, linguists, cultural scholars, and community stakeholders to develop interdisciplinary mathematical literacy in Urdu-speaking populations, integrating disciplines like literature, art, history, and science.

### 7.1.7 Policy Advocacy and Support

Advocate for policy initiatives enhancing mathematical literacy and education in Urdu-speaking regions, collaborating with policymakers, government agencies, and educational institutions to integrate mathematics into curricula, teacher training, and community outreach.

Implementing strategies and promoting inclusive mathematical literacy can empower Urdu-speaking populations to develop essential numeracy skills, critical thinking abilities, and problem-solving capacities for a complex, interconnected world.

## 7.2 *Collaboration between mathematicians and linguists for developing Urdu mathematical resources*

Mathematicians and linguists collaborate to create high-quality Urdu mathematical resources, ensuring accuracy, effectiveness, and cultural relevance for educators.

### 7.2.1 Translation and Adaptation

Linguists collaborate with mathematicians to accurately translate mathematical concepts, terminology, and instructional materials from other languages into Urdu, ensuring rigor, clarity, and precision while adhering to linguistic conventions.

### 7.2.2 Cultural Context and Relevance

Linguists can help mathematicians understand Urdu-speaking communities' cultural nuances, enhancing relevance and engagement among students by incorporating cultural references, examples, and contexts into mathematical resources.

### 7.2.3 Language Accessibility and Comprehension

Linguists and mathematicians can work together to address language barriers and comprehension challenges faced by Urdu-speaking learners, thereby promoting inclusivity and accessibility in mathematics education.

### 7.2.4 Pedagogical Strategies and Instructional Design

Linguists can enhance Urdu teaching materials by utilizing language acquisition, literacy development, and instructional design principles, thereby addressing the linguistic and cognitive needs of Urdu-speaking students.

### 7.2.5 Quality Assurance and Review

Linguists and mathematicians can enhance the effectiveness and reliability of Urdu mathematical resources by collaborating on linguistic analyses, proofreading, and editing.

### 7.2.6 Professional Development and Capacity Building

Linguists offer training and professional development opportunities for mathematics educators to improve their Urdu language proficiency, pedagogical skills, and cultural competence, ensuring high-quality instruction for diverse learners.

Educators can enhance mathematical literacy, promote inclusive learning environments, and empower Urdu-speaking students through collaboration between mathematicians and linguists, fostering culturally responsive resources in Urdu.

## 7.3 *Integration of cultural elements into mathematical education in Urdu-medium schools*

The integration of cultural elements into mathematical education in Urdu medium schools enhances relevance, engagement, and understanding by connecting concepts to students' cultural heritage and experiences.

### 7.3.1 Cultural Contextualization of Examples

Incorporate culturally relevant examples, problems, and scenarios in mathematics lessons to make learning relatable and meaningful for Urdu-speaking students, highlighting their traditions and everyday experiences.

### 7.3.2 Exploration of Cultural Artifacts

Study cultural artifacts like Islamic geometric patterns, textiles, and architectural designs to understand mathematical concepts, encourage problem-solving, and interpret their significance within cultural contexts.

### 7.3.3 Integration of Cultural Symbols and Motifs

Incorporate cultural symbols into classroom activities, worksheets, and visual aids to reinforce mathematical concepts in a culturally meaningful manner.

### 7.3.4 Cultural Mathematics Projects

Encourage students to explore mathematical concepts in cultural contexts, focusing on Urdu literature, art, architecture, and music, to foster creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking skills.

### 7.3.5 Multicultural Perspectives

Explore diverse cultures and civilizations' contributions to mathematics education, including Urdu-speaking regions, by highlighting the achievements of mathematicians, astronomers, and scientists like Al-Khwarizmi, Ibn al-Haytham, and Omar Khayyam.

### 7.3.6 Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity

Create a supportive, inclusive learning environment in mathematics education, valuing students' cultural backgrounds and identities, fostering open dialogue and appreciation for diversity.

Educators in Urdu medium schools can enhance mathematical literacy and achievement by incorporating cultural elements into their curriculum, promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation for mathematics.

## 8. Conclusion

### 8.1 *Summary of findings*

- The literature emphasizes the significance of incorporating cultural elements into mathematical education for equity and inclusion, thereby creating a more culturally responsive learning environment.
- Pedagogical strategies like contextualizing examples, exploring cultural artifacts, and incorporating multicultural perspectives enhance relevance, engagement, and understanding of mathematics among students from diverse backgrounds.
- Culturally relevant mathematics education enhances student engagement, motivation, and achievement by connecting concepts to students' cultural heritage, interests, and experiences, boosting confidence and problem-solving skills.
- Inclusive learning environments, valuing cultural diversity, foster a positive classroom culture that promotes learning, collaboration, and social cohesion by promoting cultural awareness and mutual respect among students.
- Teacher professional development is crucial for culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum design, empowering educators to integrate cultural elements into mathematics instruction, promoting equity, diversity, and social justice.
- The study suggests that incorporating cultural elements into mathematical education improves learning outcomes, promotes cultural awareness, and fosters a sense of belonging among students.

### 8.2 *Implications for future research and practice*

- Longitudinal studies will explore the long-term impact of culturally relevant mathematics education on students' academic achievement, attitudes, and career aspirations, identifying strategies for promoting equitable outcomes.
- Implement teacher preparation programs and professional development initiatives focusing on culturally responsive pedagogy, language diversity (*Wagner, 2006*) and inclusive teaching practices, evaluating their effectiveness in enhancing teachers' cultural competence and student outcomes.
- Collaborate with educators, curriculum developers, and assessment specialists to design culturally responsive mathematics curricula, instructional materials, and assessments, evaluating their impact on student learning outcomes.

- Foster community partnerships to integrate cultural elements into mathematics education, involving schools, universities, community organizations, and cultural institutions to enhance students' learning experiences and promote community empowerment.
- To integrate digital technology, multimedia resources, and innovative pedagogical approaches into mathematics education, fostering culturally relevant learning environments and problem-solving activities.
- Comparative studies explore the integration of cultural elements into mathematics education across various traditions, systems, and regions, identifying commonalities, challenges, and opportunities for cross-cultural collaboration.
- Advocate for policy initiatives promoting cultural relevance, equity, and social justice in mathematics education, collaborating with policymakers, government agencies, and educational institutions to integrate cultural elements into standards and professional development.
- Future research can enhance understanding of integrating cultural elements into mathematics education, promoting equitable learning outcomes, and empowering students for success in the field.

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## Case as an Anaphor Agreement Effect is only an illusion

Gurujegan Murugesan<sup>1</sup>

Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur

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### ABSTRACT

In this paper, I show that the case as an Anaphor Agreement Effect is only an illusion that occurs due to the absence of a nominative/absolute form of the anaphor. Furthermore, I demonstrate that this is a more general phenomenon found in typologically unrelated languages like Inuktitut and Hindi-Urdu. In the absence of an agreeing case form of an anaphor, I illustrate that there is no underlying syntactic constraint like the anaphor agreement effect operating in these languages.

### 1. Anaphor Agreement Effect: A short primer

The term ‘Anaphor Agreement Effect’ (AAE) refers to the descriptive generalization made in Rizzi (1990) that anaphors do not occur in syntactic positions constructed with agreement. In other words, Rizzi generalizes that anaphor can never control agreement on the verb. This observation can be straightforwardly tested in languages that allow agreement from object position. Italian, for instance, allows agreement from object position in the dative subject construction with a nominative object. In such constructions, the sentence is grammatical when the agreement is controlled by the pronominal object (1a), but becomes ungrammatical when the object is an anaphor (1b).

- (1) a. A me interessano solo loro  
to 1SG matter.3PL only they

‘To me matter only they.’

(Rizzi 1990: 32 (14b))

- b. \*A loro<sub>i</sub> interessano solo se-stessi<sub>i</sub>  
to 3PL matter.3PL only REFL

‘To them<sub>i</sub> matter only themselves<sub>i</sub>.’

(Rizzi 1990: 33 (15b))

Binding Theory (Chomsky 1981) cannot explain the ungrammaticality of (1b) because the dative subject serves as a local antecedent to bind the anaphor. Thus, Rizzi concludes that it is the

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding Author: [gurujeganm@iitj.ac.in](mailto:gurujeganm@iitj.ac.in)

incompatibility between anaphor and agreement that causes the problem. Since Rizzi's initial observation, there have been different accounts from a cross-linguistic perspective to characterize the AAE generalization, including Woolford (1999), Shiraki (2004), Tucker (2010), Patel-Grosz (2014), Sundaresan (2016), and Preminger (2019). These accounts converge on the idea that the AAE is a universal phenomenon. Murugesan (2019, 2022), however, shows that the generalization is not universal because there are languages like Tamil, Gujarati, Archi, Ingush, and Khanty that exhibit AAE violations. In addition, Rudnev (2020) points out that Avar, a Northeast Caucasian language, also violates the AAE.

In languages that obey the AAE, it is not always the case that the configuration of an anaphor controlling agreement leads to ungrammaticality, as we have seen with Italian. There are different strategies that languages employ to repair such configurations, including *default agreement*, *agreement switch*, and *anaphoric agreement*. See Woolford (1999) and Sundaresan (2016) for detailed discussions of these strategies.

In addition to the previously reported AAE strategies, Yuan (2023) proposes that Inuktitut employs a novel method, where the lexical case of an anaphor prevents potential agreement with the verb. Thus, Yuan argues that the case marker functions as a strategy in Inuktitut to overcome the violation of the AAE. Contra Yuan (2023), in this paper, I put forth a set of arguments to show that case as an Anaphor Agreement effect is only an illusion that arises as an accidental by-product due to the absence of an absolutive anaphor rather than being motivated by any underlying syntactic principles. In addition, I also demonstrate that Inuktitut facts are similar to Hindi-Urdu that also lack the absolutive anaphor.

The paper is structured as follows: In section 2, I describe Yuan's (2023) analysis of Inuktitut and its parallel with Hindi-Urdu. In section 3, I present arguments to show why case strategy is merely an illusion. In section 4, I discuss the absence of the absolutive case form of an anaphor as the cause for the illusion. In section 5, I present reasons for the lack of absolutive anaphor. Section 6 is the conclusion.

## 2. Case as AAE: Inuktitut and Hindi-Urdu

Inuktitut is an ergative-absolutive language, where both arguments control agreement on the verb (2a).<sup>2</sup> However, when the object is a reflexive anaphor, it occurs with a lexical modalis case -nik that prevents object agreement, and there is only the subject agreement (2b).

- (2) a. Taiviti-up      Kiuru      nagli-gi-janga  
          David-ERG      Carol.ABS      love-TR-3SG.S/3SG.O  
          'David loves Carol.'

- b. Taiviti<sub>i</sub>      immi<sub>i</sub>-**nik**      nagli-gi-juk

<sup>2</sup> As pointed out by Yuan (2023), Inuktitut belongs to the continuum of Inuit dialects within the Inuit-Yupik-Unangan language family spanning the North American Arctic and Greenland.







‘Ram<sub>i</sub> is not himself<sub>i</sub>’

(Davison 2000:405 (5))

Thus, even in the non-AAE scenarios, the AAE strategy invariably occurs as a case-marking along with the anaphors. The question at this point is whether the case marking in Inuktitut can be considered as an instance of an over-application of the strategy? In other words, if the lexical case is the way that AAE violations are obviated in Inuktitut, and if this lexical case assignment can only occur prior to the point in the derivation where it is determined whether or not a noun phrase will be a target of agreement, then we expect precisely the over-application pattern.

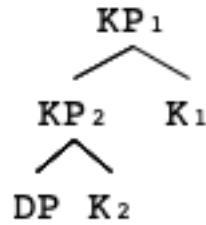
Apart from the *look ahead* issue, there are number of problems that arise with the over-application approach. Firstly, Inuktitut anaphor does not always occur with the same lexical case marker *-nik*. It can also occur with other case markers depending on the given syntactic contexts. As pointed out by Yuan, other oblique cases like allative (9a) and similarius (9b) are possible with the anaphor .

- |     |    |  |                          |            |                           |
|-----|----|--|--------------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| (9) | a. | immi-nut   | uqa-qati-qaq-tunga       |            |                           |
|     |    | self-ALLAT   | speak-partner-have-1SG.S |            |                           |
|     |    | ‘I am talking to myself.’  |                          |            |                           |
|     | b. | Ragili   | Kiuru                    | immi-titut | inngi-qatta-qu-janga      |
|     |    | Ragilee-ERG  | Carol.ABS                | self-SIM   | sing-GEN-want-3SG.S/3SG.O |
|     |    | ‘Ragilee <sub>i</sub> wants Carol <sub>j</sub> to sing her <sub>i</sub> .’ |                          |            |                           |
|     |    | (Yuan 2023:421 (15))   |                          |            |                           |

Therefore, the lexical case *-nik* that was already added as an AAE strategy needs to be deleted when it is accompanied by another case marker. Yuan implements this deletion in terms of the *haplology rule* given below.

- (10) *Haplology rule on adjacent  $K^0$ s* (Yuan 2023:)  
 Given two KPs, if KP1 dominates KP2, and there is no other XP such that XP is dominated by KP1 and XP dominates KP2:  $K2 \Leftrightarrow [\emptyset]$ .

(11)



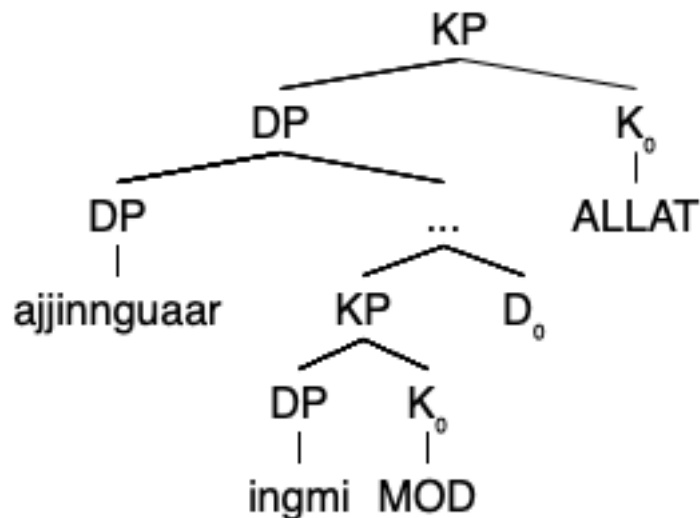
Thus, the inner modals case is deleted when there is another case marker. However, it should also be noted that there are instances in Inuktitut where adjacent case morphemes are possible without any intervening modifiers as in (12), where modals and ablative occurs together.

- (12)      sivuliuqti<sub>i</sub>    ajjinnguar-mut    ingmi<sub>i</sub>-ni-mut      qimirua-giaqtu-qqau-juq  
                  premier    picture-ALLAT    self-MOD-ALLAT    look.at-go.to-REC.PST-3S.S

‘The premier<sub>i</sub> went to go look at a portrait of himself<sub>i</sub>.’ (Yuan 2018a:197 (29))

In order to prevent the haplology rule from deleting the inner modals case in (12), Yuan (2018a) proposes that (12) involves a different structure where a DP with null D<sub>0</sub> intervenes between two case markers as in (13).

- (13)    *Case stacking* (Yuan 2018a: 198 (32b))



needs to be introduced. In addition, a constraint to the application of haplology needs to be maintained by appealing to the intervening DP with a null  $D_0$ . This approach not only adds complexities to the derivation but also poses a significant learnability problem. In the absence of any morphological or semantic evidence, the learner has no way to determine the presence of *-nik* before it undergoes deletion in (11).

Another more serious issue that concerns the over-application of strategies is that any particular language fact would qualify as an AAE strategy cross-linguistically. The clause-bound local anaphors in English like *herself* can only occur in the object position. Therefore, the absence of object agreement in English would qualify as an AAE strategy. Similarly, the absence of  $\phi$ -agreement across the board in languages like Japanese would also become an AAE strategy. Such undesirable consequences can be avoided if the AAE is recognized not as a cause but as an effect, as its name suggests. In other words, there is no such underlying syntactic principle such as the AAE operating cross-linguistically by employing different strategies. It is only because a given language already has a particular grammatical pattern that an AAE-like phenomenon happens as an epiphenomenal consequence. Thus, it is because English does not have an object agreement, the AAE-like pattern occurs. Crucially, it is not because of the AAE, English does not have an object agreement. The same holds for Japanese as well. In this sense, Inuktitut and Hindi-Urdu are not different from English and Japanese. If there is no corresponding  $\phi$ -agreement in English and Japanese, it is simply the case that there is no nominative/absolutive form of an anaphor in Inuktitut and Hindi-Urdu, which are all independent facts of these languages that have nothing to do with the AAE.

#### 4. Absence of nominative/absolutive form of an anaphor

As pointed out in the last section, both Inuktitut and Hindi-Urdu lack an anaphor's nominative/absolutive case form. This can be noticed in the following case paradigm of both these languages, where only case forms other than nominative/absolutive are possible.

(14) *Inuktitut*

<u>Case</u>	<u>Anaphor</u>
Nom/ABS	
Mod	immi-nik
Loc	immi-ni
Allat	immi-nut

(adapted from Yuan 2023:418 (8))

(15) *Hindi-Urdu*

<u>Case</u>	<u>Anaphor</u>
Nom/ABS	
Acc	aapnee aap-ko
Loc	aapnee aap-see
Allat	aapnee aap-me

(Davison 2000:401)

Given this gap in the paradigm, these languages need some form to fill the syntactic context that expects the nominative form of the anaphor. Inuktitut makes use of the case form *-nik* and Hindi-Urdu makes use of *-ko*. This can again be noticed in the picture DP context in Inuktitut and Ergative-Absolutive context in Hindi-Urdu. In the picture DP context in Inuktitut (16), a regular DP does not require modalis case marker (16a), but anaphor requires it (16b). Similarly, in the ergative-absolutive context in Hindi-Urdu (17), a regular DP does not require *-ko*, but the anaphor requires it.

- (16) a. Kiuru<sub>i</sub>-up taku-qqau-janga [ajjinnguag ivvi-nnguag]  
 Carol-ERG see-PST-3S.S/3S.O picture.ABS 2SG-fake.ABS  
 ‘Carol saw a picture of you.’ (Yuan 2023:419(10a))

- b. Kiuru<sub>i</sub>-up taku-qqau-janga [ajjinnguag ingmi-**ni**-nnguag]  
 Carol-ERG see-PST-3S.S/3S.O picture.ABS self-MOD-fake.ABS  
 ‘Carol saw a picture of you.’ (Yuan 2023:419(11a))

- (17) a. Rahul-ne kitaab parh-ii thii  
 Rahul(M)-ERG book(F) Read.HAB-PERF.FSG be.PST.FSG  
 ‘Rahul had read the book.’ (Bhatt 2005: 759 (2a))

- b. Meena<sub>i</sub>-ne apnee aap<sub>i</sub>-**ko** dekh-aa thaa  
 Meena(F)-ERG self’s self(F)-ACC see.PERF.MSG be.PST.MSG  
 ‘Meena<sub>i</sub> had seen herself<sub>i</sub>.’ (Murugesan 2019:145 (353))

Since the case forms that the anaphor happens to occur cannot control agreement, anaphor ends up not controlling agreement. On the other hand, if the case forms that anaphor can control agreement, then it is expected for the anaphor to control agreement. The latter scenario plays out in another Indo-Aryan language, Gujarati, which also does not allow the nominative/absolutive form of an anaphor under the ergative subject. Nevertheless, the accusative case form in which the anaphor occurs in the place of a nominative anaphor is not immune to agreement. As a result, the case marked anaphor controls agreement in violation of

the AAE in Gujarati. As shown in (18), anaphors that obligatorily require the *-ne* suffix exhibits  $\phi$ -covarying verbal agreement.

- (18) a. Raaj-e                      potaa\*(-ne)                      sandov-yo  
               Raj(M)-ERG              REFL-ACC                      involved-MSG  
               ‘Raj<sub>i</sub> involved himself<sub>i</sub>’
- b. Sudha-e                      potaa\*(-ne)                      sandov-vi  
               Sudha(F)-ERG              REFL-ACC                      involved-FSG  
               ‘Sudha<sub>i</sub> involved herself<sub>i</sub>’                      (Mistry 2000: 344 (19))

As already pointed out in Murugesan (2019, 2022), these facts disprove the validity of the AAE as a crosslinguistic principle and the strategies that languages use to overcome its violations.

Therefore, the approach that I am pursuing here considers the absence of the absolutive anaphor as an independent fact of the language and the AAE as an accidental byproduct. An advantage of this approach in languages like Inuktitut is that there is no need for an assumption that anaphors are lexically specified with modalis case. The anaphor with modalis case is expected in the place of absolutive anaphor but the case marker comes with its own set of morpho-syntactic properties. These properties of case markers are not only exhibited by being immune to agreement but also in its distribution. For instance, while Ergative-Absolutive is possible with regular pronouns and R-expression (19), Ergative-Modalis is independently ruled out by the dependent case frame (20) (Marantz 1991, Baker 2015).

- (19) Taiviti-up                      Kiuru                      nagli-gi-janga  
               David-ERG                      Carol.ABS                      love-TR-3S.S/3S.O  
               ‘David loves Carol’                      (Yuan 2018a:194 (21a))
- (20) \*Taiviti<sub>i</sub>-up                      nagli-gi-juq                      ingmi<sub>i</sub>-nik  
               David-ERG                      love-TR-3S.S                      self-MOD  
               ‘David<sub>i</sub> loves himself<sub>i</sub>’                      (Yuan 2018a:115 (25b))

Thus, the only possible case frame that anaphor can occur is Absolutive-Modalis.

- (21) Taiviti<sub>i</sub>-up      immi<sub>i</sub>-nik      nagli-gi-juq  
David.ABS      self-MOD      love-TR-3SG.S  
‘David<sub>i</sub> loves himself<sub>i</sub>’ (Yuan 2023:414 (2b))

In the above example, the verb carries the transitivizing suffix *-gi*, which Yuan points out is exceptionally allowed only with the anaphors. The same case frame with the transitivizing suffix *-gi* is not possible with the pronouns (22).

- (22) \*Taiviti                  Kiuru-mik        nagli-gi-juq  
David.ABS              Carol-MOD     love-TR-3SG.S
- ‘David loves Carol’ (Yuan 2018a:199 (36a))

Yuan refers to this contrast between (21) and (22) to show that *-nik* with an anaphor is a lexical case. However, it should also be noted that anaphoric expressions like reciprocals in Inuktitut are not overtly expressed. Hence, no case-marking is involved, but it obligatorily requires the transitivity suffix for its interpretation (23) (Beach 2011).

- (23) a. \*nalli-gusu-uti-juuk  
love-feel-RECP-3D.S  
‘They love each other.’
- b. nalli-**gi**-uti-juuk  
love-feel-TR-RECP-3D.S  
‘They love each other.’ (Beach 2011) (Yuan 2018*a*: 40 (37)))

In addition, it has been observed cross-linguistically that anaphors usually have some form of a verbal signature that is generally not possible with non-anaphoric expressions. This phenomenon has been well documented particularly in South Asian languages like Manipuri (24) as ‘verbal reflexive’ (Abbi 1990, Subbarao 2012) and as ‘anaphoric agreement’ in Bantu languages like Swahili (25) (Woolford 1999, Baker 2008).

- (24) a. ai-na            caobi-bu            thagat-li  
          1SG-NOM    chaobi-ACC    praise-NF  
          ‘I praised Chaobi.’



- b. ai-na isa-bu thagat-**ce**-li  
 1SG-NOM chaobi-ACC praise-VR-NF  
 ‘I praised Myself.’ (Devi and Subbarao 2002:50 (1-2))

- (25) a. Ahmed a-na-m/\*ji-penda Halima  
 Ahmed 3SBJ-PRS-3OBJ/REFL-love praise-NF  
 ‘Ahmed loves Halima.’

- b. Ahmed a-na-ji/\*m-penda mwenywew  
 Ahmed 3SBJ-PRS-REFL/\*3OBJ-love Self  
 ‘Ahmed loves himself.’ (Vitale 1981: 137) (Woolford 1999: 21 (264))

Though the verbal reflexive *-ce* in Manipuri and the anaphoric agreement *-ji* in Swahili are not the same phenomena, the fact remains that these markers exceptionally show up only when the anaphor occurs as the object of the sentence. Therefore, the exceptional occurrence of anaphor in Inuktitut with the transitivity suffix *-gi* is not unexpected, and crucially, it does not reflect the lexical nature of the case marker *-nik* when it occurs with the anaphor.

Another advantage of dissociating any inherent link between the anaphor and the case marker *-nik* is that there is no need to assume a haplology rule or a constraint to the haplology rule. If the absolutive case is the default case for regular pronominals and R-expressions, then the modalis case *-nik* becomes the default case for anaphors. This is again seen in the picture DP context, where the pronominals occur in the absolutive form (26a), and the anaphor occurs with *-nik* (26b).

- (26) a. [ajjinnguag ivvi-nnquaq]  
 [picture.ABS 2SG-fake.ABS]
- b. [ajjinnguag ingmi-ni-nnquaq]  
 [picture.ABS self-MOD-fake.ABS]

When the whole picture DP containing an anaphor occurs in another case environment like allative, case stacking is expected because the allative case is added to an entire DP that already contains the anaphor with *-nik*.



‘Women were bored with themselves.’ (Murugesan 2019: 142 (342))

In addition, we can also rule out the AAE for the absence of nominative anaphor because the nominative form of an anaphor is ruled out even in the infinitive construction where there is no requirement of agreement (31).

- (31) \*Svóna fólki ber ekki að líka SIG  
such people.DAT bears not to like.INF REFL.NOM

It is not for such people to like themselves’ (Murugesan 2019: 143 (347))

Maling (1984), in fact, argues that there is no syntactic explanation possible to account for the non-existence of nominative anaphor in Icelandic. Instead, she provides a functional explanation by stating that only a few verbs take nominative objects. Consequently, there was practically little or no need for anaphor in the nominative case. The same explanation would not extend to Ergative-Absolutive languages like Inuktitut and Hindi-Urdu, where most transitive verbs allow for the absolutive object. However, still, these languages lack the absolutive form of an anaphor.

Considering these facts, I suggest the non-existence of anaphor is due to the specific and definiteness nature of anaphor when they typically occur in the object position. Thus, by virtue of being bound by the c-commanding subject, it is generally not possible for the anaphor to be non-specific and indefinite. Coincidentally, another area of grammar where specificity and definiteness seem to interact with grammatical features is Differential Object Marking, also termed as DOM. Aissen (1999, 2003) proposes several markedness scales underlying DOM marking cross-linguistically.<sup>5</sup>

- (32) a. *Grammatical function:*

Subject > Indirect Object > Direct Object

- b. *Prominence:*

pro (1st,2nd) > pro (3rd) > PN > def > indef spec > indef non-spec

Aissen predicts that the lower the argument on the GF-scale (32a) and the higher the argument on the prominence scale (32b), the more likely it is to be marked for case. Moreover, in Raynaud’s (2020) analysis, anaphors are considered to form a natural class along with 1st person and 2nd person. Therefore, anaphors in the direct object position will be higher on the prominence scale and lower on the grammatical function scale. As a result, anaphor cannot avoid the case marking. In fact, Davison (2000: 405) makes a similar observation for Hindi-Urdu, where she remarks that ‘there are syntactic and morphological constraints which make it unlikely that a reflexive would be nominative. A reflexive in subject position of a finite clause would

<sup>5</sup> See also Keine and Müller (2008, 2011, 2015) for a post-syntactic OT-account of the phenomenon.

have no local antecedent. If it were in object position, a reflexive should have the *-ko* because its referent is animate and specific.’ This nature of anaphor is accommodated differently in different languages. As pointed out earlier, in Hindi-Urdu, *-ko* marking with the anaphor is possible with the ergative subject, but the modalis case of Inuktitut can only occur with the absolutive subject due to restriction caused by the dependent case frame. In the case of Icelandic, the sub-categorization requirement of the verb allows nominative pronouns to stand-in for the absence of nominative anaphor.

- (33)            Maríu<sub>i</sub>            fannst            hún<sub>i</sub>            vera            gáfuð  
                  Mary.DAT       Seemed.3SG   3SG.NOM   be            Gifted  
                  ‘Mary<sub>i</sub> thought she<sub>i</sub> was smart’

## 6. Conclusion

In this paper, I have shown that the non-existence of nominative/absolutive anaphor is mainly due to the nature of anaphors, which are by default specific and definite. As a result, anaphors are more likely to be case marked in accordance with Aissen’s model. When the case markers that anaphor happens to occur cannot independently control agreement, it creates an illusion of Rizzi’s anaphor agreement effect in languages like Inuktitut and Hindi-Urdu. I have also shown with a parallel example from Gujarati that when the case marker that anaphor happens to occur is not immune to agreement, then there is nothing that prevents  $\phi$ -covarying agreement. Thus, contrary to the view that has gained currency in recent proposals, I have shown that there is no underlying syntactic principle or a constraint like the AAE in any of these languages.

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## The Impact of Deliberate Practice in Improving Writing Ability among Students at Tertiary Education

Ragupathi Ramasamy<sup>1</sup>

NPR College of Engineering & Technology, Tamil Nadu

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### ABSTRACT

First year engineering students are taught Technical Writing as a mandatory course in order to strengthen their academic writing as well as to enable them to become competent engineers so that they can excel themselves in professional bodies. When their writings are in an attempt to read, they are found to be thick with errors. It is imperative for them to write in flawless manner in their career. Hence there is a demand to make them communicate effectively with all readerships so that they maintain their professional image for a better future. A course on Written Communication is offered not like other courses but as a crash course demanding outcome without using any AI tools because it is believed that AI tools may direct the students to copy from the suggestions instead of writing on their own. It is further designed as writer-centred and employer-centred in building confidence among learners in written communication. First, a pre-test was administered to gauge the students' readiness for writing-based communication in particular. This made it easier to understand why students hadn't written to one another despite having twelve years of exam-writing experience. The test results have been examined by using pertinent statistical software: MS- Excel. 336 male and 354 female first-year undergraduate students participated in the current study shortly after finishing their first semester classes. They ranged in age from 17 to 20. They finished 12 to 14 years of schooling. Majority of them came from middle-class families and attended CBSE schools as well as vernacular and English-medium schools. The merit of the course was assessed by having a semi-structured interview and analyzing the feedback along with their writings. The result of this research is that regular, commonly used and authentic material provides a key in improving students' writing skills provided that a deliberate practice in reading and writing is done.

### Introduction

The education system of India mainly focuses on writing skills rather than speaking skills in order to evaluate the taught' attainment level at all levels. Teachers, employers and even learners are concerned about ABC's (Accuracy, Brevity and Clarity) of English Expression in writing (Hunt, K. W., & O'Donnell, R,1970). Students find it difficult to write any form of writing in their academics because they fail to convey their intended message through writings to the reader. Revisions are sought at all times by professors. Students studying at tertiary level avoid writing themselves since they dislike to rewrite. Instead, their friend or a professor either dictate or write for them (Graham, Steve, Omer Faruk Tavsani, and Abdullah Kaldiri,2021). Even though students at college level know all sorts of writings, they have been taking strenuous

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [paperrrs@gmail.com](mailto:paperrrs@gmail.com)

efforts to improve their writing and making attempts on their own (Ebrahimi, Fatemeh, et al, 2021). Many a time teachers or trainers send them back to write the same again pointing errors in conveying messages (Ewa McGrail , Gertrude Tinker Sachs , Joyce Many , Cecilia Myrick & Sharr Sackor, 2011). Sometimes students fail to gain appropriate use of words and phrases. They are thwarted in their attempt to imitate an authentic one either books or notes prepared by the teachers since the requirement arises all of a sudden (Burns, A, 1996, Carroll, T.R). When it comes to communication, which has evolved to take on many different forms depending on the objectives, language is crucial and is often taken for granted. Despite the fact that many languages are spoken, English is often considered an associate language. It has been accepting many words and meanings from all languages, as if it has a thick skin. In Great Britain, English has been widely spoken for many years. Its grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation have all undergone such fundamental changes during this time (Brookes, I, Marshall, M, 2004). Old English, which was used up until the 11th century, was the earliest variety of the English language, introduced by Germanic invaders beginning in the 5th century. Before the British established their colonies in a number of nations, it is already known that English has been the language of the world and the language in which resources are available from A.D. 1600 and A.D. 1700. Despite the company's origins as a trader, it served as a means of political discourse. Wherever English is spoken, the sun never sets, according to Randolp. (H.G. Widdowson and Randolph Quirk) It is stated by Robinson, Christine M, and Gerard M. Blair that native speakers of English language, particularly engineers, are poor at writing ((Robinson, Christine M., and Gerard M. Blair,1995).

Many people want to speak English fluently because they believe it is the key to success in specialized courses in today's competitive world (Alice,U & Glenn,Toh, 2006). Salman Rushdie makes the point that the English language has occupied many people's minds and has spread many different cultures and people. Though many people assert their ownership of this "silver language," according to N. Krishnaswamy, no one can claim that the English language is their own. It is used in all five continents and is not exclusive to one region or continent (Krishnaswamy,N and Lalitha Krishnaswamy,2006). At present, Oxford English Dictionary (OED) has attempted inclusion of Bermudian English also. In nations like the UK, the US, Canada, Australia, and India, English is spoken either as a first language or as a native tongue. English is a second or foreign language in many nations. Despite the fact that their native tongue is the official language in some nations, many people are actively learning and attempting to use English (Lin, Linda HF, and Bruce Morrison, 2021). No one can sit back and lament at the end of an era when there is a tremendous increase in global communication, as Peter Strevense (1980) correctly states. Writing Skills in English are offered to students of Engineering in a curriculum designed as a course for three semesters including a laboratory-oriented course. Writing skills can be introduced to them into the curriculum having communication as one of the outcomes of the programme through which they are taught necessary components of writing by members of the department either as an additional language or a medium of study in India. Even though there are advantages to learning writing skills, they face a large quantity of information, which they are not able to remember (Bagiati, A., Yoon, S.Y., Evangelou, D. *et al.*, 2015). Considering writing skills for the first-year engineering students a good number of different composition writings along with exercises for their practice are given and the scheme of evaluation is also modified (Morris, N.P., Ivancheva, M., Coop, T. *et al.*, 2022). Having objectives of teaching writing skills for engineering students, many things are taken into account syllabus, duration, method of evaluation and education tools (Badger,R., & White,G.2000, and Azmi, Nouredine, 2017).



### **Need for the Study**

AI tools play now-a-days a vital part in preparing the engineering students to get readily available answers for every demand. It is obvious that AI tools discourage human intelligence in creating expressions. Although numerous studies have been conducted to enhance speaking and writing skills in higher education, the goal of this investigation is to discover the most effective way to increase students' interest in speaking and writing. When the facilitator speaks to the students in English, they form opinions and continue to communicate in English language. When it comes to writing, the readers find the letter to be irreparable. Sometimes when students write about what they have learned in class, their punctuation marks do not follow the syntax and semantics. It is therefore imperative to take necessary actions to make them unstoppable in their ability to communicate with others effectively in writing (Lin, Linda HF, and Bruce Morrison, 2021). According to Peter Ecbow, those who are attempting to communicate their ideas are powerless because they lack command over the language they use (Peter Ecbow-4). Writing is unavoidably regarded as a complex process due to the challenges involved in learning and honing writing skills (Steve Graham and Dolores Perin (2007), Walter K. Smart & Daniel R. Lang (1979). Communication is not always face-to-face, but can also take place through gestures, tone, and other nonverbal cues. It may be difficult to evaluate the speaker's attitude, intention, intonation, etc. because communication does not always occur over phone, a mobile device, or another method (Lu, Zhihong, et al., (2010), Madhavan, P. (2018), Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri (2012). As far as an Engineering degree is concerned it is necessary to acquire professional skills particularly in writing. Writing is still the preferred method of communication because it is seen as a reliable and authentic proof and also people often write to people who are distant or only reachable online (Robinson, Christine M., and Gerard M. Blair, 1995). First year engineering students are facilitated to improve their written English in a professional communication module designed by the members of all engineering boards in Tamilnadu. By this way, students of technical education have to study writing skills introduced in the syllabus. Topics, which strengthen their confidence in their professional English in expressing answers asked in all the courses offered and wherever necessary like process description, definition writings, explaining and academic writings. Writing may be used without reinforcing patterns of grammar and particularly concrete words in the present English Language Learning classroom as a second language because writing is a regular mode of communication for many in business (Manousou, 2015). Most of the students, who had completed a diploma in technical education, were not able to cooperate with modern talents required for corporate companies (Madhavan, 2018).

### **Scope of the Study**

It is common knowledge that students who enroll in higher education have at least twelve years of experience learning English as a second language under their belts. Since the beginning of their course, they have been writing exams in English, but they still struggle to write meaningful sentences that can be perused and understood (Graham, Steve, Omer Faruk Tavsanlı, and Abdullah Kaldırım. 2021). Despite the various definitions for technical writing, according to Laplante, Phillip A. (2012), everyone is prone to using their own jargon when expressing themselves.

Students at tertiary education find it difficult to write a paragraph or a letter without making any mistakes, despite the fact that they speak and write in class and take notes frequently. Lack of sufficient writing practice and vocabulary in English could be the issues. Despite

adhering to the convention of assignment writing, students are still prone to plagiarizing. Because they haven't had the opportunity to practice writing independently, when they are suddenly asked to write on their own about a project they completed, they find it impossible to construct a complete thought. Rabab'ah (2003) explained that students' inability to express their ideas verbally is due to their inadequate vocabulary.

It has been discovered by studying the writing of the respondents that they were instructed in sentence transformation by giving a set of rules or a formula. They weren't taught how to compose complete sentences on their own. For instance, they are unaware of the critical significance of "reported speech" when they write a story. It is clear that the student authors do not have much experience reading news, articles and stories for themselves. They were told to memorize the answers, which were dictated and they write them down in exam papers in many schools. It has been known from the informants when they are asked the reason for not having enough practice in self-expression in writing but in higher education, students are expected to write independently as they gather information and read widely (Walter K. Smart & Daniel R. Lang (1979), Axelrod, Rise B, Charles R. Cooper, Alison M. Warriner (2009), Graham, Steve, Omer Faruk Tavsanlı, and Abdullah Kaldırım (2021).

Verbs must be used in the correct forms because the predicate is one of the key components in creating meaningful sentences (Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). Students do not take care of their writings, as well as their planning before writing is almost zero. Silva (1993) cited in Brown (2007) has found that the L2 writers do less planning, are less fluent (use fewer words), less accurate (make more errors), less effective in stating goals.

Since predicate is one of the most important elements in producing meaningful sentences, it is necessary to use verbs in its appropriate form. A student in her writing wrote, "As my friends and I were planning to arrange a get together party in Coimbatore, we were in need of 10 hotel rooms for it".

When the above sentence is analyzed, it is evident that the student has not gained experience about the use of verbs, its forms and pronouns as well. In the main clause there is repetition. Repetition can be seen in the above sentence (for it) and (get together). Even though the student mentioned the reason in the subordinate clause, she had repeated it in the independent clause too. The student is expected to write a letter to a hotel manager to book 10 rooms. But she had written in past tense with the wrong form (voice).

A student, who had her higher secondary in Karnataka, wrote a report about the problems she had in the hostel. In her report she had used the idiom 'but then' and conjunction 'when' wrongly. She wrote, 'The hostel was comfortable then, but when our seniors arrive the problems started.' It could be written as, 'The hostel was comfortable, but our seniors made it uncomfortable by their visit.' It is evident that they had heard of the idiom but they did not have experience in using the idiom in their writing.

The formal letter has a standard format, but some students involved in the research were unaware of the standard format. After writing "From and To", they put commas. When writing "Yours", apostrophe s was written. It is an irrefutable fact that "yours" is a possessive pronoun so that it does not have an apostrophe like nouns.

The students undertaking engineering study have been in the dearth of authentic material in relation to academic and extended text in writing communication (Lin, Linda HF, and Bruce

Morrison, 2021). There have been scholars undertaking research related to writing skills from school and preparing materials with the scope of improving writing skills of students but the hindrances of practice with materials have been the result of the status of lacuna in engineering students' writing communication (Bacha, Nahla N, 2002).

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study aims at finding out solutions for formidable limitations of materials and practice in answering three questions:

- What is the status of writing skills of students in technical writing?
- How are students involved in writing in English correctly and effectively, such as when composing letters, applications, descriptions, and accounts of daily activities.
- What are the materials, which kindle students' cognitive skills believing authentic and easily available for regular use?

### **Methodology of the Study**

The evaluation and teaching processes serve as the foundation for research. First, a pre-test was administered to gauge the students' readiness for writing-based communication in particular. This made it easier to understand why students hadn't written to one another despite having twelve years of exam-writing experience. The test results have been examined using pertinent statistical software.

336 male and 354 female first-year undergraduate students participated in the current study shortly after finishing their first semester of classes. They ranged in age from 17 to 20 and finished 12 to 14 years of school. The majority of them came from middle-class families and attended CBSE schools as well as vernacular and English-medium schools. These 336 male respondents were grouped into 37 groups and 354 female students were grouped into 39 groups for Pre-test, semi-structured interview and Post- Test.

The students were classified according to the place they live in and the stream in which they have studied.

1. Rural Vs Urban.
2. Medium in which they completed their higher secondary.

### **Research Tools**

1. Instructional Modules based on the syllabus of the First year BE and B.Tech.
2. Class Work Progress based on the tests and semi-structured interview
3. Pre- Test
4. Post Test.

### **Background of this Study**

Speaking and writing are both productive skills that should be honed because verbal communication can be accomplished either through speaking or writing. The first language can be spoken out at home by watching and imitating elders, whereas writing needs to be taught systematically in school (Bacha, Nahla N(2002), Brookes, I, Marshall, M. (2004). Writing is not just a logical progression from learning a language, according to Ann Raimes (P.04). Young children first learn the fundamentals of speaking and understanding speech before acquiring reading and writing skills (Kellogg.R.T-1994: P.7).

Robert wonders why so many students detest writing even though it is thought of as an essential component of human existence (Robert-1990:p.5). Speaking and writing are two of the four communication skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) that are productive. It is thought that speaking can be learned while writing skills are developed at the higher education level because when writing skills are developed, the writer should try to produce texts that are persuasively clear, relevant, true, informative, interesting, and memorable for readers (Bacha, Nahla N(2002), Brookes, I, Marshall, M. (2004). According to Nastaran Mehrabi, speaking and possibly even listening require a deeper understanding of the grammar system than writing does (Mehrabi: P.No. 1686–1691).

The most natural way to use language is through speech, and learning a language naturally starts with speech. Therefore, it makes psychological sense to start speaking in a second language. Many modern language teaching experts agree that speaking is the foundational skill for all other skills, including the more "profitable" ones of reading and writing. The learner has to be in a better position to continue on his own to expand his vocabulary and must handle more complex constructions, once the fundamental systems of the language have been mastered through practice with a smaller number of words and structures, as required in everyday speech (Walter K. Smart & Daniel R. Lang (1979), West William W(1998), Steve Graham and Dolores Perin (2007). A.W. Frisby, one of the field's pioneers, observed that once a child understands a language unit according to the rules and will actually be understandable to other skills. His ideas continue to influence modern thinking in language teaching (Radhakrishnan,V(2005).

Aristotle discussed three speech functions: forensic (courtroom speech), deliberative (political speech), and epideictic (speech of praise or blame). Cicero also discussed three other purposes for speech: judicial (for use in court), deliberative (for use in politics), and demonstrative (for use in ceremonies, like Aristotle's epideictic). St. Augustine of Hippo, writing a little more recently, also discussed three distinct speech purposes: to teach (providing people with information), to delight (entertaining people or exposing people's misconceptions) and to sway (persuade people to a religious ideology). The sentences above demonstrate that speaking plays a significant role in one's life. The main goals of a speech are typically to inform, persuade or entertain. The informative speech is a narration about a particular subject but it does not involve a consistent teaching effort. Examples of speeches to inform include presentations at commanders' calls, orientation talks, and speeches to civic clubs. The goal of the persuasive speech is to persuade the audience to believe or take a particular position on a subject, item, or other issue. All speeches intended to persuade, from budget planning to summaries of political changes, are given to students of engineering for group discussion. It is believed that the student observers enjoy and are involved in the speech because it is entertaining. The orator tries to make his or her speech frequently humorous and colourful as his or her main tools for mesmerizing the visitors. A speech given at a restaurant could be an entertaining speech. (John Kline, 2008, pp. 15–75)

Speaking to others and writing to them both play significant roles in communicating intended information or compelled commentary on the required topics. Broadly speaking, no effective communication takes place, unless they speak or write despite non-verbal communication (Jarrin.X and Kim.C, (2019). Writing is not just a "natural" extension of speaking a language when learning a first language. Everyone picks up their first language at home, but most people have to take classes in school to learn how to write it (Bacha, Nahla N (2002), Brookes, I, Marshall, M. (2004). There are many significant differences between spoken language and written language. Here are some major differences (Van Lier, 1995, p.88)

Spoken Language	Written Language
Auditory One	Visual Viewed and Read and Understood
Short-term; Instantaneous	Long-lasting; Gradual Reception
Rhythm, Stress, Intonation	Punctuation
Immediate feedback	Delayed or Response is Perusal Bound
Planning and Editing - Partial	Limitless Preparation, Editing and Revision

Everyone learns their native tongue during the first few years of life, and while speech is universal, many adult native speakers of the language find learning reading and writing challenging (Lin, Linda HF, and Bruce Morrison, 2021), even though they are given training for a full day as a drill. Now-a-days with the help of nursery rhymes, many children are fed food. As they are listening to rhymes frequently and observing actions played on screen, they are likely to imitate in their day-to-day games. When it comes to adult speaking, engineering students have difficulty in coining words appropriate to reaction and in framing sentences they toil away (Zhang, Fan, et al, 2022). It is true that spoken languages have dialect differences, whereas composing an extended text in writing typically requires standard forms of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax (Jarrin.X and Kim.C, (2019). Mature writing is assured when proper planning is done by ensuring reviewing and editing for better understanding of the readers (Kellogg, Ronald T., and Bascom A. Raulerson,2007). Knowing the different dialects is crucial for developing speaking abilities. Semantics, syntax, and lexicon in writing in English are all considered to be standard, regardless of the dialects that people use when speaking. Writing is treated as a kind of continuous practice as a marathon fixing a dead line. Such practice will result in stopping to a certain state of improvement (Boice,1985,1997).

### Experimentation of Material Process

The degree of ownership that a student can claim over the concepts developed, the solutions discovered, and the viewpoints expressed must be disclosed. To ensure meaning in his or her writing, the writer must adhere to certain rules, including punctuation conventions. (Ebrahimi, Fatemeh, et al. 2021). It's common wisdom to claim one's words. The sentences that each writer creates must be their own. Owning sentences is the only way to gain writing confidence. Cafarella and Barnett discovered that students lack self-assurance in their writing skills as it is more difficult for them to decide what to revise and how to explain their choices to the people giving them feedback. This was especially true when various faculty members gave conflicting feedback (Can, 2009 p.25). Following an evaluation of the respondents' pretest responses, the researcher would come up with simple strategies and techniques to help the respondents feel comfortable writing. Newspapers were provided to the participants for brainstorming. Because the respondents wanted to participate voluntarily in expanding their knowledge, no instruction was given for the first five minutes. Nearly all of the students engaged in peer discussion. In order to involve the students in the development of their vocabulary and sentence structures, the researcher would like to build on the student writers' prior knowledge (West William W, (1998) , Uno, Akira, et al.,(2009).

Peregoy & Boyle (2004), as cited in Brown, Peregoy & Buelde (1999), Krashen (2004), and Dochy, Segers & Buelde (2004) all found that background knowledge helps readers understand what they are reading (2007). These academics claim that the participants' textbooks occasionally may not provide them with a variety of sentence structures (Graham, Steve, Omer Faruk Tavsanlı, and Abdullah Kaldırım, (2021). Student writers were given practice from

reading newspapers to familiarize them with sentence structures. News that the respondents could easily understand, was given to them. The respondents expressed interest in using the provided newspaper to find out information. The news that had been comprehended was to be rewritten by the informants. To facilitate the students writers in finding sentence structures employed in communication via writing, newspapers were provided because the students could confidently write sentences from newspapers thinking that the sentences written were error free (Raimes, Ann and Susan K. Miller-Cochran (2013), Manousou, A. (2015), Radhakrishnan, V (2005), Madhavan, P. (2018). They took the published sentences as authentic ones, but some students came with some doubts recollecting the grammar rule.

Given the wealth of information provided, reading the news was beneficial for each student writer. By taking the respondents to the library, it was open for self-discussion and analysis (Uno, Akira, et al. ,2009). The students in the study room were shown both recent and old news articles. To help them understand how sentences are put together to convey ideas, the participants were told to read any news of their choice. It was thought that student writers could comprehend the methods of expressing one's ideas to others while taking the audience into consideration (Robinson, Christine M., and Gerard M. Blair, 1995). It is undeniable that reading newspapers, as a writer, exposed the respondents to a wide variety of linguistic idioms, chunks, and phrases in many contexts and situations. According to Raimes and Susan (2013), when they write about topics they are passionate about, writers produce their best work. When students need ideas, they can look at their course books, reports of recent events in newspapers, local, regional, district, state and world issues in editorials and also libraries having local magazines (Raimes and Susan, 2013). It is clear that such extensive exposure to language ultimately enables student writers to retain and reflect upon effective methods for communicating ideas in their writing. According to Doughly and Long (2003, p.61), sample writings expressing realistic discourses will help the native and non-native speakers accomplish the target language tasks. When they had trouble understanding any sentence patterns, chunks, or phrases, informants could talk about it in the setting that had been created (Bacha, Nahla N, (2002), Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). Reading materials in the target language from books, magazines, newspapers, or any other sources, as well as being exposed to a rich diet of authentic language discourse as possible, is one of the most obvious requirements in teaching a second language (Charlene Polio (2014) Vol. 18).

It goes without saying that in order to taste everything for beginners and understand anything they are learning; prerequisite knowledge is required. The use of meaningful material is a fundamental requirement for learning a new language, provided the sources used can be clearly related to the learner's current situation (Alice, U & Glenn, Toh, (2006). Newspapers are crucial in helping student writers develop their writing skills (Faustin Mutwarasibo, 2013, Vol. 11). Students found it simple to relate the news to their current situation. They could easily understand the concepts because the news that they are familiar with is occasionally published in newspapers. Even though the novices are fully engaged in understanding the news in the target language, it is obvious that they have difficulty in expressing themselves. When they are asked to report any event that happened in his presence, they hunt for words many times.

According to Lee and Van Patten (1995), the language the learner was reading must have some sort of message that the learner was expected to pay attention to (Lee and Van Patten (1995), p.38). The participants received training in reading reports about incidents and accidents they were familiar with in addition to familiar news stories. Understanding the subject matter is

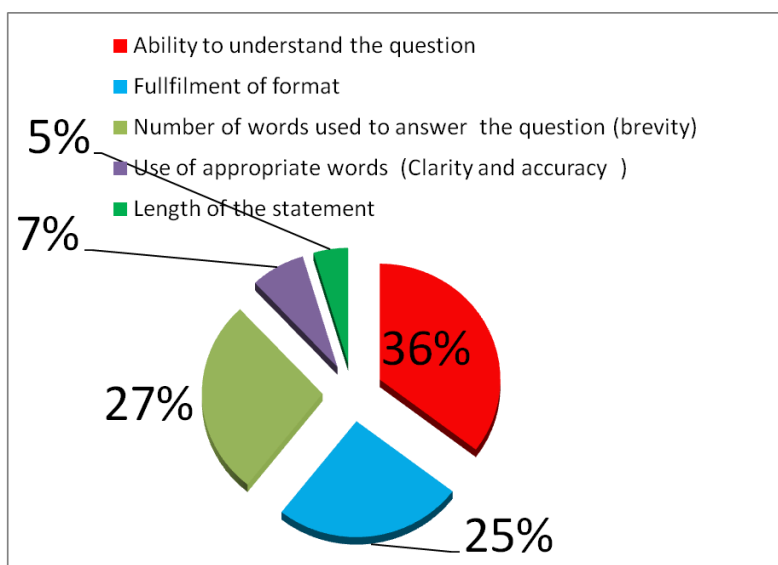
impossible in language learning unless the respondents understand every phrase. The significance of comprehension in the target language is further emphasized by Lee and Van Patten, who write that "acquisition consists of a larger part of the building up of the form-meaning connections in the learner's head (Lee and Van Patten, 1995, p. 38).

The respondents were asked to write a paragraph on their own topic in order to determine whether the performances of the participants in their composition writing have improved significantly. There were two ways to conduct the evaluation process. The first instruction given to the respondents was to exchange notebooks while having their composition evaluated (Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri, 2012, Vol. 3, No. 5, pp. 948–952). The participants were given permission to use dictionaries while assessing their composition so that they could discuss and analyze as Ashraf Rizvi suggested ABC technique. The student writers were also able to inductively learn and unlearn a great deal of things about syntax, semantics, etc (M Ashraf Rizvi (2009). The student writers were asked to submit their note books for the instructor's review once they were satisfied with their writing. Since informants were given training to read and write as trainees, they could recollect words and appropriately use those words and be good enough in using compound and complex sentences. It was noteworthy that they had a chance to rewrite, after having discussed among them. However, the participants had difficulty in using phrases. The student writers were provided written comments on their writing and then they were asked to answer some questions in detail. The errors pointed in the respondents' composition were explained. At the outset the student writers were given additional training using Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English Oxford Writing Tutor (Hornby, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed.(p wt1-32)).

## Result and Discussion

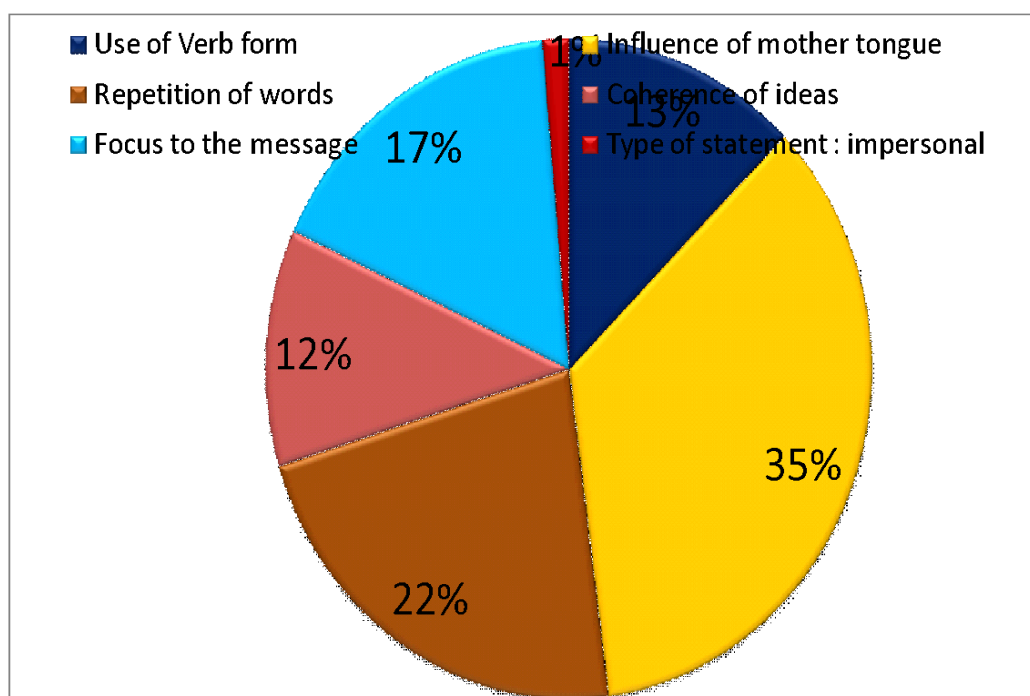
Out of the 766 students chosen, 690 were self-interested, as was previously mentioned. First year 690 BE and B.Tech students were non-randomly chosen, leaving 76 students. Based on three controlled variables—gender, age, mother tongue, and medium—the researcher matched all 690 students.

### Pre- Test



### Chart -1 Pre- test Findings

Six questions covering report writing, letter writing, proposal writing, paragraph writing, and process description were given in order to assess the informants' prior writing knowledge. It was then determined whether the student writers could comprehend the questions, whether the standard format was followed, and whether the fundamentals of good writing were available. Only 5% of students had used phrases and connectives in their writing, which was very obvious. Since the majority of the students had trouble understanding the questions, it was thought that they needed reading practice. Some students were unable to respond in writing to the given situations because of their misunderstandings. Surprisingly, 27% of respondents had good writing skills.

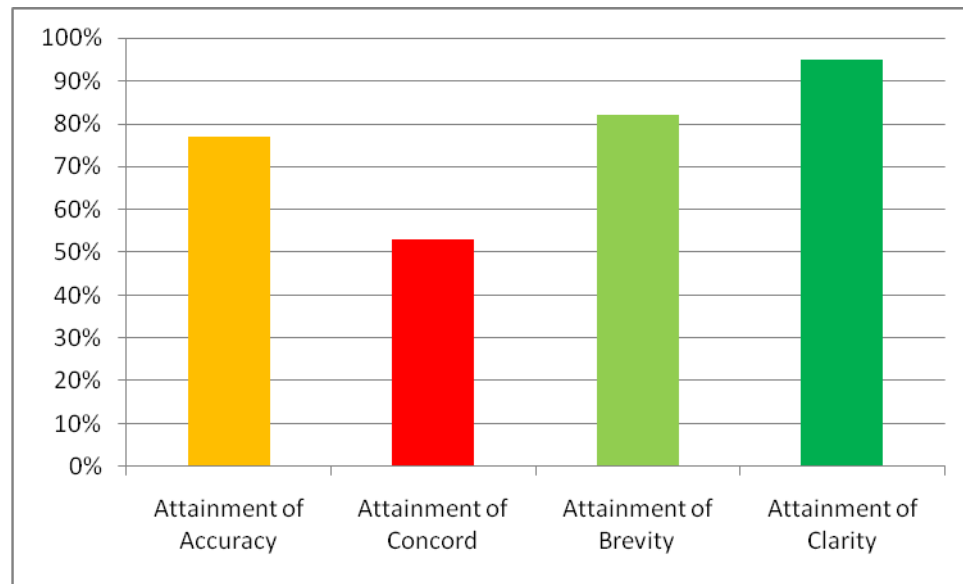


### Chart-2 Pre -test Findings

The pre-test writing component scores revealed, according to the researcher, that the student writers were impacted by the mother tongue. 35% of the informants were likely to make mistakes in their writing because they had little experience reading the work of native writers and translating it from their mother tongue. The student writers were unable to use the correct form of the verb in their writing despite their extensive learning. It was discovered that 22% of student writers repeated words as a result of their limited vocabulary. The paragraphs written by the students lacked coherence. Even though a detailed instruction was given on how to write sentences in the passive voice, only one student was able to do so when writing their report.



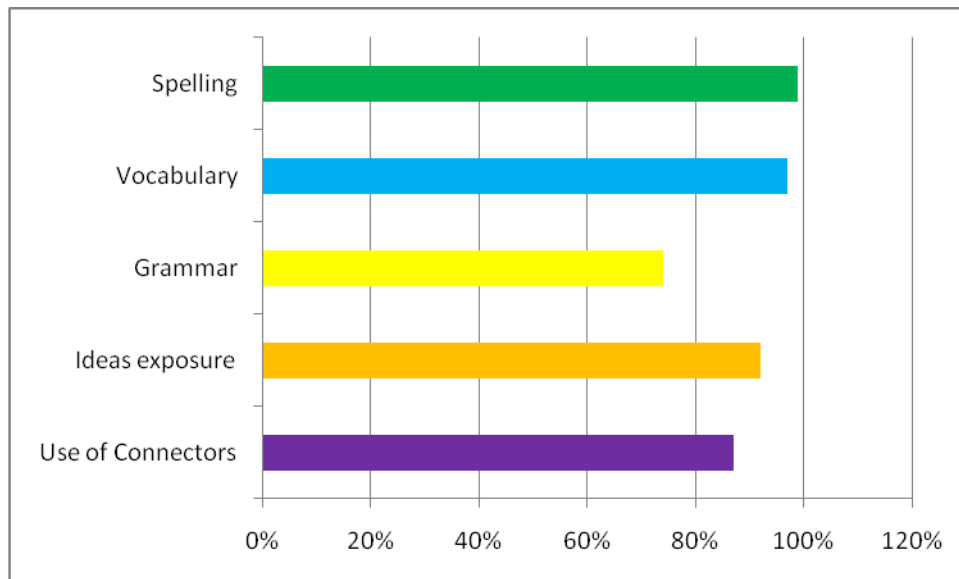
### Known to Unknown:



### Graph- 3 Attainment of ABC

Graph 3 demonstrates how the student writers' technical writing ability, particularly clarity in expression, significantly improved as a result of their consistent reading and writing practice. According to Rizvi, clarity can be attained through the use of straightforward language, precise and concrete words, and clear expression. The researcher discovered that regular practice could enhance students' ability to achieve clarity. Only 83% of the words were used concisely due to a lack of word power. The student writers received practice in subject-verb agreement, but they occasionally struggled with quantitative adjectives. When the students practised being succinct, their accuracy levels rose noticeably.

### Improvement in Essay Writing

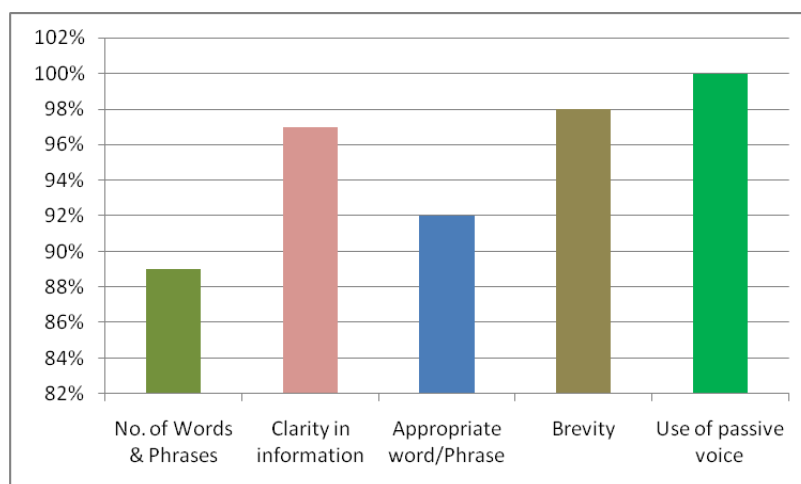


### Graph-4 Essay Writing

Twenty scrambled sentences related to their real-life context were given to the informants taken from the newspaper. The students were asked to make use of the given words in producing meaningful sentences. Teaching on the usages of words started with a preference for writing a sentence, as a sentence is a group of meaningful words, which gives a complete sense. A sentence starts with a capital letter and ends in different punctuation marks like period, question mark, interjection mark and has comma, semicolon, hyphen and so on in between words and phrases. The scrambled sentences have all the above said sentence components. In particular, scrambled sentences activity was seen as a useful preliminary activity in developing writing ability of the adult learners, since they had been taught sentence structure and other grammatical rules necessary to make an error free sentence. Learners were gradually trained to be familiar with elements of a sentence. The first task was started in expressing the present and actual position of the students and then they were steadily involved in attempting writing sentences having remembered the basics of a meaningful sentence including punctuation marks.

To help the student writers become more proficient at writing their ideas down at a higher level, general writing activities were given to them. The learners were made know all the grammar rules inductively. Moreover, the students understood some basic grammatical rules and the elements of a sentence too. Most importantly, semantics, syntax and punctuations were made familiar to the students, so that the student writers could remember the above elements, while they would write. When errors were pointed out, some students came with many doubts and showed interest in grammar. Since a few students were totally uninterested in grammar, the researcher did not go into deep about the usages and tenses. Each student writer achieved a 98% accuracy rate for word and spelling through consistent writing practice. It was discovered that spelling could only be improved by using the words repeatedly. The researcher worked hard to increase the student writers' vocabulary strength. Because of the grammar, the informants were unable to recognize the different parts of speech. The majority of the time, student writers used adverbs and propositions incorrectly in their writing. Connectors received a significant amount of attention from the researcher because the respondents had been using them without realizing their purposes. The graph-4 clearly demonstrated that the student writers' use of connectors had significantly improved.

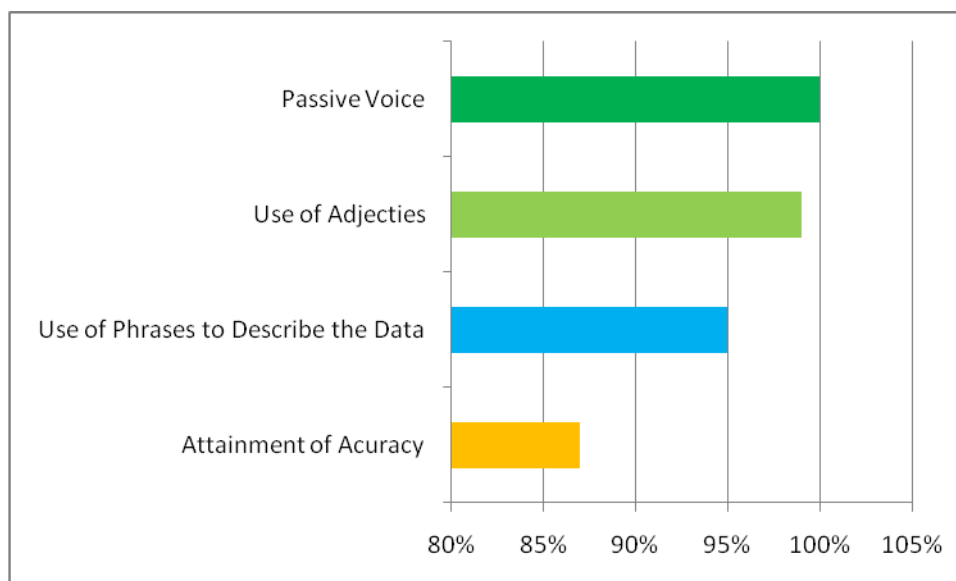
### Letter Writing



### Graph-5 Letter Writing

Letter writing plays a significant role in effective communication in higher education (Zhang, Fan, et al., (2022), Lin, Linda HF, and Bruce Morrison(2021). Since writing letters has so many different purposes, there is no set application format used at the college level, allowing student writers to fully focus on honing their letter-writing skills. The techniques and methods used attracted the teachers. The informants significantly improved communication through the use of passive voice. The writing's brevity improved significantly as a result of the techniques used. In their letter writing, they used few words and phrases while still maintaining the clarity of the information.

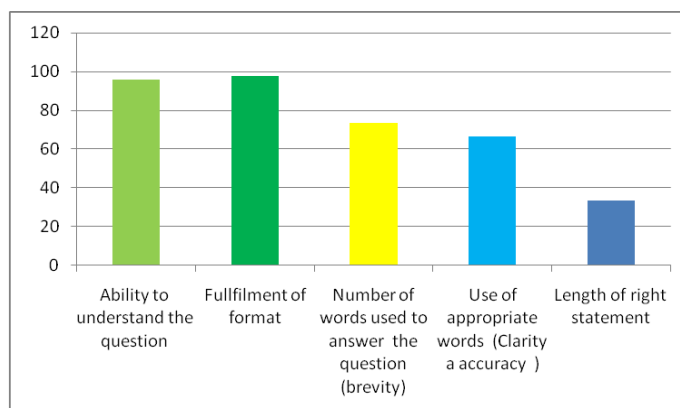
### Channel Transfer



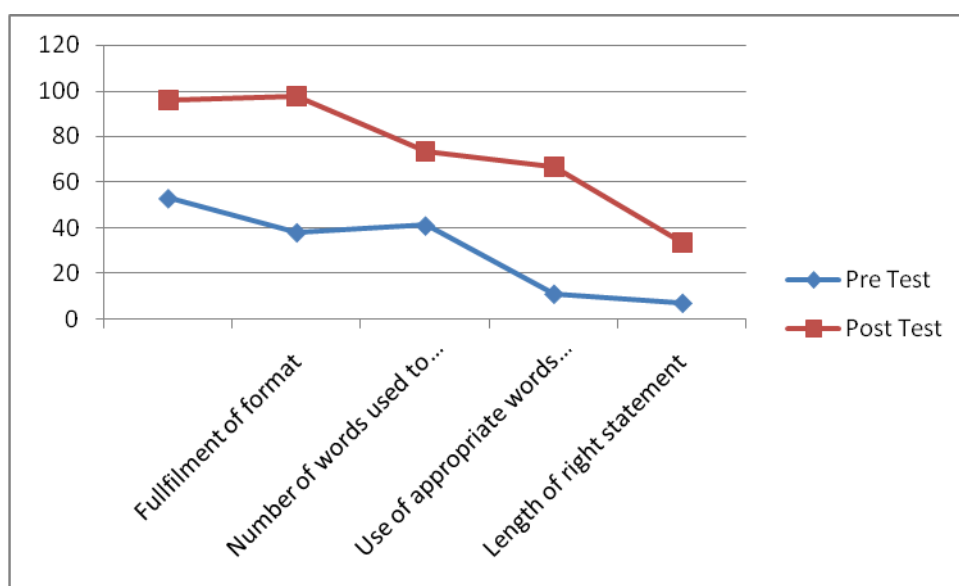
### Graph-6 Data Description

The results showed that there had been a noticeable improvement in the use of adjectives and phrases. After a rigorous practice in reading newspaper editorial columns, the students are able to imitate the nuances of use of verbs, adjectives and prepositions. They could understand information given in newspapers and rewrite just by doing changes in the data published in the newspaper. The accuracy rate for translating nonverbal communication into verbal communication was 87%. In addition to learning how to explain the given data and the rising and falling graphs, the student writers also learned comparative adjectives and phrases.

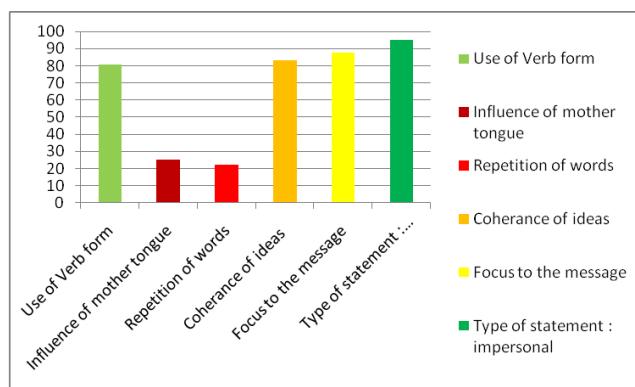
## Post Test

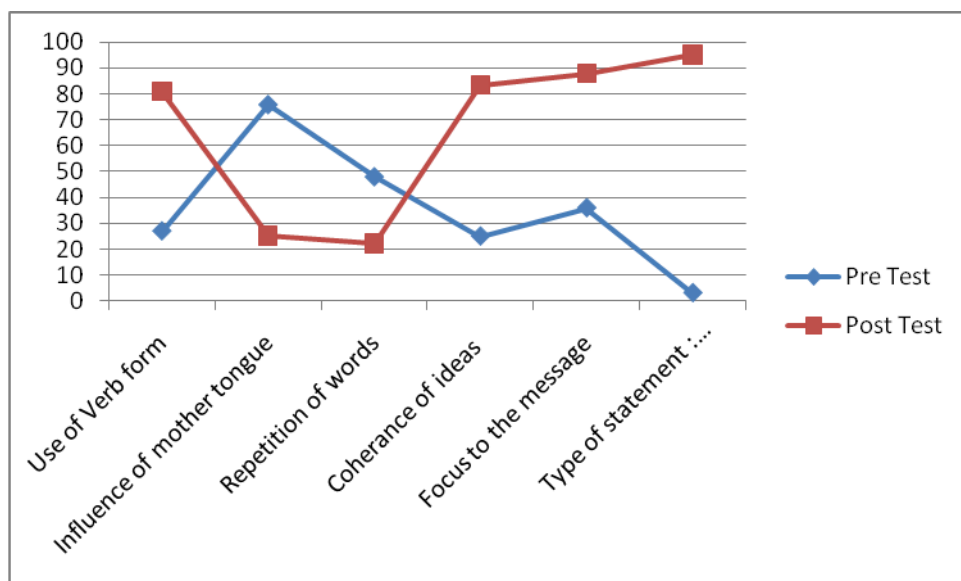


## Graph 7 Post Test



## Graph 8 Pre Test and Post Test



**Graph 9 Post Test****Graph 10 Pre Test and Post Test**

The investigator discovered that, given enough practice, the informants had improved their writing skills in terms of all the writing elements and mechanics. Graph 07 demonstrated a significant improvement in post-test results. The ability of the informants to comprehend was greatly enhanced. As Rizvi explained, style in technical communication can refer to how a person puts words together into sentences, arranges sentences into paragraphs, and organises paragraphs to frame a piece of writing in order to convey technical information clearly, accurately, and concisely. The learners had gradually improved their style in this area (2009 Rizvi, p. 35). The researcher discovered that using a controlled and guided approach significantly impacted the purification and training of the students to become proficient writers. The experimental study has undoubtedly yielded the desired outcome. The investigator has provided logical justifications for the findings.

Reading enables aspiring authors to comprehend the fundamentals of sentence construction, and readers can easily copy this understanding and get involved in it. The student writers could better express themselves by understanding the patterns and structures. Writing is thought to be a challenging skill to learn because students sometimes lose interest in their writing when their instructors point out errors and tell them to write the same thing with different structures. The repetition and delay in the task usually make the students get bored and upset. It may be preferable to read similar ideas expressed by native writers before copying their sentence structures in order to express one kind of thought in a way that is clear to learners and free of errors. It is clear that such extensive exposure to language ultimately enables student writers to retain and reflect upon effective methods for communicating ideas in their writing. The students were shown a sample writing that had been published in a newspaper as well as English news publications. The sentence structure of the student writers had significantly improved, and they had all answered their questions by reading examples. The constant practice of writing paragraphs and essays led to gradual improvements in cohesion and conciseness. Accuracy, concision, and clarity have greatly improved in technical writing, including process descriptions,

observation summaries, instruction manuals, and proposal writing. It was successful to improve the use of conjunctions in cogent writing.

### **Conclusion**

The fundamental principle of improving writing skills for students at tertiary level is done by involving them to deliberately practice every nuance of writing discourses by reading newspapers. Student writers are instructed and trained by employing authentic materials as guides like pages focusing on local news, cricket news, editorial page, cinema news and so on. Acquiring expertise in writings of texts extended to academic excellence takes investment of deliberate practice in reading and free writing as a good number of years are invested in school education. Student-writers are instructed to evaluate their writings, interchanging themselves so that they are involved in discussion and sometimes their approach in improving their skills in writing sounds good. Presumably, such practice enables student-writers to have cognitive control over production of extended texts on different needs. Cohesion and Brevity were steadily improved because of repeated training in paragraph and essay writing. Accuracy, brevity and clarity were considerably enhanced in technical writing like process description, observation writing, instruction writing and proposal writing. Enhancement in using conjunctions in cohesive writing was successfully improved. Writing for academic and professional purposes was well improved providing them Handouts. Handouts played an important role in technical writing and letter writing. When letter writing and technical writing were concentrated the learners were provided handouts. It had a tremendous effect in the respondents' involvement and improvement in both technical and letter writing. Letter to the editor in the newspaper helps them to strengthen their word power in writing letters and reports. The students' feedback was collected and the same was helpful to evaluate optimum use of materials and approach adopting micro level teaching. In real time, practice was given so that involvement of the learners was enhanced. The study can assist the teachers at stages of teaching and improving writing skill in English from varied ranges. Research is to be done in the best possible manner to develop writing skills at school level so that it will show better results when they express their knowledge on subjects at tertiary level. Now-a-days, many applications are used in improving the cognitive level of learners, but the potential growth in making significant improvement in writing at tertiary level is analyzed. The research was taken at tertiary level to improve writing ability of university students in Coimbatore. It was found that they could improve their writing skills by practicing regularly with authentic sources adopting collaborative approach but the finding of the pre test showed that they must unlearn more than learning something new. It is better to give importance in writing at school level instead of dictating them to memorize the text prescribed. The same study may be done at high school level so that they are able to develop better writing skills.

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## Linguistic Communication: Reductionism or Anti-Reductionism

Gopi Nath Mondal<sup>1</sup>

Jadavpur University, Kolkata

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### ABSTRACT

Most of our knowledge depends on linguistic communication. However, all of our beliefs based on linguistic communication are not considered as a piece of knowledge. What makes this type of belief a knowledge? Epistemologists have no agreement in this regard. Some epistemologists follow reductionist theory; however, others refuse to accept it. In this paper, I discuss reductionism and anti-reductionism in the epistemology of testimony. In the first part of the paper, I discuss how the reductionist theory of testimony developed based on Hume's writings. Then I discuss how this theory evolves. In the second part of this paper, I focus on anti-reductionism in the epistemology of testimony. In this part, I present the main arguments of anti-reductionism in favour of their claim that the hearer must accept the speaker's assertion without any verification. Lastly, I argue that both theories are not accepted.

In everyday life, we know through sense experience, memory, intuition, and what is written by others or said by others. However, most of our knowledge depends on linguistic communication. In this process, we impart the information with the use of sounds or conventional symbols. Using gestures, written symbols, or voice sounds within a language framework refers to linguistic communication. Hence, our everyday activity largely depends on knowledge based on linguistic communication. If I wanted to know about the history of ancient Rome then I need to go through the authentic book on it. I would not be able to know about the history of ancient Rome through perception or memory; it depends only on the testimony. However, in some cases, a scientist is able to know about past events without any testimonial help. For example, suppose, some scientists discover a pyramid in northern Egypt and they examine it through some scientific ways and are convinced that the newly discovered pyramid is the oldest pyramid ever discovered. As a common man, we do not have much expertise about the scientific method applied by scientists, so we have no other way except to accept what is said by the scientist. Hence, we have to recognize the knowledge-providing capacity of the testimony. However, sometimes, of course, testimony misleads us. For example, if any religious priest only based on his faith and religious myth, without applying any scientific method, considers any pyramid as the oldest pyramid in the world, the testimony of the priest about the oldest pyramid is not trustworthy to us, hence we will not be able to get any knowledge from what is said by the priest. So, every statement or report of another person should not be considered a source of knowledge or testimony. Only a justified true statement or report is considered a testimony.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [gopinath.mondal@jadavpuruniversity.in](mailto:gopinath.mondal@jadavpuruniversity.in)

However, the question is what makes testimonial belief justified? Is it justified *a priori* way or *a posteriori* way? One can claim that he/she knows that P, only if he/she satisfies the justificatory condition of knowledge i.e. if he/she is justified in believing that P.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, justification of the testimonial belief is a fundamental problem of the epistemology of testimony. Though, epistemologists are not unanimous on the issue of justification of a testimonial belief. Some epistemologists, such as David Hume (2000), and Elizabeth Fricker (1987, 1994, 1995, 2002, 2006), tried to explain the justification of testimonial belief with the help of non-testimonial beliefs. According to them, testimonial beliefs are ultimately justified by non-testimonial beliefs. This way of understanding the justification of testimony is known as the reductionist theory of testimony. However, some other epistemologists, such as Tyler Burge (1993), and Jennifer Lackey (1999, 2006, 2008), refuse to admit the reductionist account of the justification of testimony. They have considered testimony as a *sui generis* source of knowledge; so we do not have any requirement of another not-testimonial source of knowledge, such as perception, memory, etc. for the justification of the testimonial belief.<sup>3</sup> According to them, testimonial beliefs may indeed depend only on non-testimonial knowledge, such as perception, memory, etc. For example, when we hear or read a (some) statement, still, the justification of the testimonial beliefs need not depend on non-testimonial knowledge, it depends only on testimonial knowledge (Pritchard 2006: 92; Adler 2012). This way of understanding the justification of the testimony is known as the anti-reductionist theory of testimony.

Since the anti-reductionists claim that justification of the testimonial belief depends on testimonial belief, so for the justification of testimonial belief, we need not require any non-testimonial investigation. For this reason, anti-reductionist theory is known as *a priori* theory of testimony. Moreover, reductionists claim that for the justification of testimonial belief, we require a non-testimonial investigation. So this theory is considered *a posteriori* theory of testimony.

However, here, the usage of the *a priori* and *a posteriori* in the context of the justification of the testimonial belief epistemologist does not indicate what is meant by Kant.<sup>4</sup> Both

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<sup>2</sup> “Does knowing something also imply justifiably believing it? If it does, that would explain why a true belief based on a lucky guess is not knowledge. If, from a distance, I see Jim walk hurriedly down the hall and simply guess that he is angry, I am not justified in believing that he is angry.” (Audi 1988, 120)

<sup>3</sup> “Much of the discussion will revolve around the question of whether testimonial justification must ultimately reduce to non-testimonial justification (i.e. to justification that is based on other epistemic sources such as perception, memory and inference). The reductionism/anti-reductionism debate about testimonial justification dominated much of the early phase of recent epistemology of testimony, with reductionists making the case that testimony is a purely derivative epistemic source, while anti-reductionists insisted on its status as a *sui generis* source of knowledge and justification.” (Gelfert 2014, 95)

<sup>4</sup> According to Kant: “I call all representations in which there is nothing that belongs to sensation, pure (in a transcendental sense). The pure form therefore of all sensuous intuitions, that form in which the manifold elements of the phenomena are seen in a certain order, must be found in the mind *a priori*. And this pure form of sensibility may be called the pure intuition (Anschauung).” (Kant 1922, 16)

“We shall therefore, in what follows, understand by knowledge *a priori* knowledge which is absolutely independent of all experience, and not of this or that experience only. Opposed to this is empirical knowledge, or such as is possible *a posteriori* only, that is, by experience. Knowledge *a priori*, if mixed up with nothing empirical, is called pure. Thus the proposition, for example, that every change has its cause, is a proposition *a priori*, but not pure: because change is a concept which can only be derived from experience.” (Kant 1922, 716)

reductionists and anti-reductionists accept the necessity of other sources of knowledge to receive the speaker's assertion. For example, I need to use my listening ability or vision to hear an assertion or read a book. So the use of *a priori* and *a posteriori* in the context of testimony depends on the specific question of whether we need any other sources of knowledge as a ground or justification of a testimonial belief or not. Epistemologists who argue in favor of this, that is: for the justification of a testimonial belief, other sources are needed, over and above testimony, are considered reductionists or *a posteriori* theorists of the epistemology of testimony. However, epistemologists who do not accept the necessity of other sources of knowledge over and above testimony for the justification of testimonial belief are known as anti-reductionists or *a priori* theorists of the epistemology of testimony.

Hume is the main proponent of the reductionist theory of testimony. However, Hume does not give any well-structured reductionist theory of testimony. His view on testimony is in the section 'on miracle' in his book '*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*', from this, epistemologists constructed a reductionist view of testimony. In this section, Hume begins his discussion about the testimony with an argument given by Dr. John Tillotson against miracles. Tillotson argues against miraculous events described in The Holy Bible. For example, his book '*A Persuasive to Frequent Communion in The Holy Sacrament of The Lord's Supper*' mentions a miraculous event described in The Holy Bible and raises the question of whether this matter is out of all doubt or not.<sup>5</sup> Tillotson also directly objects to the miraculous event described by the Holy Bible. In his other book '*A Discourse Against Transubstantiation*' Tillotson makes a distinction between what we observe in daily life and what the Holy Bible says to us. In everyday life we see bread is bread, not the body of a man; and taste to be wine is wine, not blood. According to Tillotson, since our experience denies the miraculous event (bread is the body and wine is the blood), hence it is not to be accepted. From the argument of Tillotson, Hume concludes that testimonial beliefs are not always reliable or trustworthy.<sup>6</sup> For example, the

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<sup>5</sup> In the three *verses* immediately before, the Apostle particularly declares the Institution of this Sacrament with the manner and circumstances of it, as he had received it not onely by the hands of the Apostle, but as the Words seem rather to intimate, by immediate revelation from our Lord himself, *verse 23. (24&25) For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you; that the Lord Jesus in the same night that he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this doe in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my bloud: this doe as often as ye shall drink it in remembrance of me. (A Persuasive to Frequent Communion in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper 1683, p. 5)*

<sup>6</sup> "Everyone agrees that the authority of the scripture and of tradition rests wholly on the testimony of the apostles who were eye-witnesses to those miracles of our savior by which he provides his divine mission. So our evidence for the truth of the Christian religion is less the evidence for the truth of our senses, because even in the first authors of our religion the evidence was no better than that and obviously it must lose strength in the passing from them to their disciples; nobody can rest as much confidence in their testimony as in the immediate object of his senses. But weaker evidence can never destroy a stronger one; and therefore, even if the doctrine of the real presence were ever so clearly revealed in scripture, it would be directly contrary to the rules of sound reasoning to give our assent to it. It contradicts our senses which tell us that bread isn't flesh and the wine isn't blood; yet both the scripture and the

testimony, which represents the miraculous event, is not credible since the event represented by the testimony contradicts our experience. According to Hume, we are not only skeptical about the testimony of miraculous events but also skeptical about the credibility of other testimony concerning matters of fact (Hume 2000). For example, if any testimony about any particular event contradicts other testimony on the same event or other knowledge about the same event, then we are rightly skeptical about the credibility of the testimony. If the testimony is given by a doubtful or hesitant person, then we are not entitled to accept the testimony. For example, if any stranger asks any person for a certain direction and notices that the person has some doubt about the direction, or the person hesitates to reply, then the stranger becomes skeptical about the testimony of the person. According to Hume, we accept only those testimonies which have an empirical ground or which are compatible with the uniformity of nature. We are not entitled to accept those testimonies which have no empirical ground or which are incompatible with uniformity of nature. So, the trustworthiness of testimonial beliefs depends on non-testimonial evidence. Hence, we may consider Hume's theory on testimony as a reductionist theory of testimony.

Although reductionists are not unanimous on the reductionist approach of testimonial belief, some reductionists argue that the trustworthiness of testimonial belief always depends on non-testimonial grounds. According to them, testimony is not a fundamental source of reliance, as perception is. For example, suppose, last evening I saw a car accident in front of my office, thus the trustworthiness of the corresponding belief does not depend on any other belief. However, if one of my colleagues reports that he saw a car accident in front of our office, based on my colleague's testimony I come to believe that there was a car accident in front of our office. Still, I may be doubtful about the information and try to confirm it from the other sources which do not occur in the case of my perceptual belief. So testimony cannot be treated as a fundamental source of reliance. For this reason, some reductionists claim that every testimonial belief depends on non-testimonial grounds for their credibility or reliance. This reductionist theory of testimony is known as global reductionism (Fricker 1995: 401-403).

However, some reductionists are not so rigid about the compulsion of non-testimonial grounds for the credibility of each testimonial belief. According to them, some testimonial beliefs depend on non-testimonial grounds for their trustworthiness. Hence, this theory of reductionism is considered a minimal reductionist theory (Adler 2012). Elizabeth Fricker is one of the main proponents of the minimal reductionist theory. According to her, we are not entitled to accept the credibility of the testimonial belief by default, we have always judged the credibility of the speakers. After the assessment, if we find that the speaker is trustworthy, only then we can consider the speaker's testimony a credible one. For example, suppose, a visitor asks a stranger for a certain direction and comes to know that she is already walking in the opposite direction from her destination. According to Fricker, before accepting the stranger's testimony, the visitor should assess the trustworthiness of the stranger. However, a great problem arises at this point, whether Fricker allows the hearer to assess the speaker's trustworthiness every time or she allows the hearer to assess the speaker's trustworthiness only if there are any signs of the untrustworthiness of the speaker. For example, suppose, a visitor asks a stranger for directions to

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tradition on which the doctrine is supposed to be built have less evidential power than the senses have – when they are considered merely as external evidences, that is, and are not brought home to everyone's breast by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit.” (Hume 1999)

a restaurant and she finds that the stranger answers without any hesitation, there is no confusion, no lack of confidence in her face. In this situation can Fricker allow the hearer to critically assess the speaker's trustworthiness?

If Fricker allows the hearer to assess the speaker's trustworthiness every time, then her theory considers nothing but a global reductionism and it brings another problem, i.e. how do we always examine the speaker's trustworthiness? Are we always in a position to examine it? For instance, suppose that a visitor asks a stranger for a certain direction and she gives the answer with confidence and without hesitation, and there are no confusing signs on her face, further suppose that there is no other man from whom the visitor can verify the stranger's answer. Now, in this situation, is the visitor in a position to assess the stranger's trustworthiness? It is a big problem for this theory. Whereas, if Fricker allows the hearer to assess the speaker's trustworthiness only in the special case, i.e. if there is any ground for doubting the speaker's credibility only then the hearer can assess the trustworthiness of the speaker, then there was no such difference between her theory and Default Rule of testimony (Adler: 2013) or DR (If the speaker S asserts that P to the hearer H, then, under normal condition, it is correct for H to accept (believe) S's assertion, unless H has special reason to object) presented by the anti-reductionists.

K. Bach (1984) discussed two default rules namely, the *take-for-granted rule* and the *not-worth-considering rule*. Bach formulated the *take-for-granted rule* in the following way:

(TFG) *If it seems to me that p, provide no reason to the contrary occurs to me.*

Another default rule (*not-worth-considering rule*) was formulated by Bach in the following way:

(NWC) *If it occurs to me to do A, do A unless there occurs to me the thought of a reason to the contrary or of an alternative to A.*

Anty-reductionists provide an a priori defense of the justification of the testimonial belief. A priori theory or anti-reductionism is accepted by very limited epistemologists, such as Coady, Goldberg, Burge, etc. Burge offers an a priori defense of the *Default Rule of Testimony* (DR), which is known as the *Acceptance Principle*. Burge formulates the *Acceptance Principle* in the following way:

*A person is entitled to accept as true something that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him unless there are stronger reasons not to do so.* (Burge: 1993, 467)

The acceptance principle does not allow the hearer to take a neutral position, as a posteriori theorists have taken. However, the problem is that it seems that the *Acceptance Principle* trying to establish that the 'absence of strong reasons not to do so' is nothing but a 'strong reason to do so'. Though, we know that we cannot logically derive 'strong reasons to do so' from the 'absence of strong reasons not to do so'. Keeping in mind this problem Burge argues that we are *a priori* entitled to accept something that is *prima facie* intelligible and presented as true. So, according to Burge, hearers are *a priori prima facie* entitled to take intelligible affirmation at face value.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> To summarize: We are a priori prima facie entitled to accept something that is prima facie intelligible and presented as true. For prima facie intelligible propositional contents prima facie pre- sented as true bear an a priori prima facie conceptual relation to a rational source of true presentations-as-true: Intelligible proposi- tional expressions

Some critics raise the following objection against Burge. Imagine that the hearer has a strong reason not to accept the speaker's assertion as true and intelligible. In that situation what makes the hearer accept the speaker's assertion as a credible one? (Adler: 3013). To reply to this objection Burge (1997) introduces a new concept, i.e. *empirical supplementation* theory. According to him, without accepting empirical supplementation we are not in a position to exclude such counterfactual cases. For example, suppose, a visitor asks a stranger for directions and she observes that the stranger has some confusion about the actual direction, so he is not certain about it. Further, suppose that the stranger provides the correct direction to the visitor. In this situation the visitor is not entitled to accept the stranger's affirmation as a credible one, she needs some empirical supplementation in favor of the stranger's assertion.

Other anti-reductionists provide other arguments in favor of anti-reductionism. According to them, our cognitive or epistemic activities have some presupposition that we not only trust perception or memory but also trust ourselves. From the presupposition of self-trust, we can develop an argument for the thesis that trust the other self in the context of knowledge, since my intellectual faculties are broadly similar to others. So, if we trust our beliefs, we ought to trust the beliefs of others and also the assertion of others which convey her beliefs to the hearer.

However, this position is not so intelligible, since trust in my own beliefs is a first-person point of view but trust in other beliefs is not a first-person point of view. So, from the trust in our own beliefs, we could not rightly conclude that we ought to trust the beliefs of others.

Jennifer Lackey (2003) tries to formulate a satisfactory version of non-reductionism or anti-reductionism. According to her, non-reductionism depends on three conditions, 'necessary condition on the testimony', 'necessary condition on the hearer', and 'necessary condition on the environment'. These three conditions are essential for the non-reductionism, but they may not be sufficient, further condition(s) may be added if required. These three conditions are the minimal requirement for a non-reductionist account of testimonial knowledge. Her initial formulation of non-reductionism concerning testimonial knowledge is known as TKN. She formulated TKN in the following way:

*For every speaker A and hearer B, B knows that p on the basis of A's testimony that p if and only if: (1) B believes that p on the basis of the content of A's testimony that p, (2) p is true, and (3) B has no defeaters for A's testimony that p.*

This initial formulation is not sufficient for the non-reductionism, because it does not satisfy the minimal requirement stated above. So she modifies her initial formulation and formulates a new one. The formulation is known as TKN\*\*\*. She formulated a new version of the non-reductionism in the following way:

*For every speaker A and hearer B, B know that p on the basis of A's testimony that p if and only if: (1) B believes that p on the basis of the content of A's testimony that p, (2\*\*) A's testimony that p is appropriately connected with the*

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presuppose rational abilities and entitlements; so intelligible presentations-as-true come prima facie backed by a rational source or resource for reason; and both the content of intelligible propositional presentations-as-true and the prima facie rationality of their source indicate a prima facie source of truth. Intelligible affirmation is the face of reason; reason is a guide to truth. We are apriori prima facie entitled to take intelligible affirmation at face value. (Burge: 1993, 472)



*fact that p, (3) B has no undefeated defeaters for A's testimony that p, (4) B is reliable or properly functioning recipient of testimony and (5) the environment in which B receives A's testimony that p is suitable for the reception of the reliable testimony.*

According to her, this version of non-reductionism is a more satisfactory formulation of non-reductionism. However, it may not be a fully satisfactory formulation, but this formulation expresses the minimal requirements for a non-reductionist account of testimonial knowledge. (see J. Lackey 2003)

However, some philosophers reject both reductionism and anti-reductionism. According to them, it is a fact that sometimes we acquire testimonial beliefs from the speaker's assertion. Some beliefs, among those testimonial beliefs, can be considered testimonial knowledge; others are mere beliefs. However, we can not say that all our testimonial beliefs are grounded on non-testimonial beliefs or we can not say that our testimonial beliefs are never based on non-testimonial beliefs. Therefore, they argue in favour of contextualism. According to them, whenever we require, we verify our testimonial beliefs by the testimonial and non-testimonial beliefs. There is no strict rule for it.

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## বাংলা অনুবাদে ‘ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষা’ (১৯৪৬ থেকে ২০২০)

দেবদীপ ধীবর<sup>১</sup>

দুর্গাপুর উইমেন্স কলেজ, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ

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ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষা,  
ভাষা রক্ষা,  
মৌখিক সাহিত্য,  
ভাষা চর্চা,  
বিপন্ন ভাষার ইতিহাস

### সংক্ষিপ্তসার

বাংলা অনুবাদের সুদীর্ঘ ইতিহাসে বর্তমানের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলিও যুক্ত হয়েছে তথা হুচ্ছে। বিপন্ন ভাষার ঐতিহাসিক ধারণাটিকে অনুসন্ধান করতে গিয়ে, অনুবাদক, লেখক, ভাষা-গবেষক তথা মানুষ সচেতন অথবা অসচেতনভাবে বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলিকে রক্ষার কথা বলে আসছেন। আর এরই সঙ্গে যুক্ত হচ্ছে যুক্তিবোধের ক্রম-পরম্পরা। এক্ষেত্রে স্বভাবিকরণ বা স্বাভাবিকতার পক্ষে অবগত হওয়া দরকার। এই বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদগুলিতে নির্বাচন বিষয়টি খুবই গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। তা ভাষার নির্বাচন হোক কিংবা ভাষার মধ্যকার শব্দার্থবোধ। তেমনি এই বিপন্ন ভাষার মৌখিক সাহিত্যগুলির মূলে রয়েছে নিজের ভালো-লাগা, মন্দ-লাগা, সামাজিক, অর্থনৈতিক, রাজনৈতিক তথা ভাষাতাত্ত্বিক প্রেক্ষিত। এ প্রসঙ্গে আমরা বিপন্ন ভাষা চর্চায় বাংলা অনুবাদ কী ভূমিকা রেখেছে বা রাখতে পারে তা দেখতে চাইছি। সেই আলোচনায় যাবার আগে অনুবাদ ও বিপন্ন ভাষা-সংস্কৃতির সামগ্রিক সম্পর্ক বিন্যাসের সূত্রটি আবিষ্কার করা বা নির্ণয় করা জরুরী।

### ১.০ সূচনা

যে পৃথিবীতে আমরা বাস করি তা মূলত আপেক্ষিক। আজকে যাকে আমরা উৎস ভাষা বা লক্ষ্য ভাষা বলছি, সেই ভাষা-সংস্কৃতি থাকবে নাকি বিপন্ন হয়ে পড়বে তা আমরা স্থির ভাবে কখনোই বুঝতে পারব না। আজ যারা বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলো থেকে অপর ভাষায় অনুবাদ করছেন বা যারা বন্ধুত্বসুলভ হাত বাড়চ্ছেন সেই সমস্ত ভাষার অস্তিত্ব নিয়েও সংশয় রয়েছে। অর্থাৎ ধ্বংস বা বিপন্ন হওয়ার সমস্ত সম্ভাবনা বেশিরভাগ ভাষাতেই রয়েছে। অর্থাৎ শুধু ক্ষমতার দ্বারা ভাষার নিরাপত্তা স্থির করা যায় না, ব্যবহারই ভাষার নিরাপত্তা বিধান করতে পারে। বিপন্ন ভাষা আলোচনার মূল লক্ষ্য ভাষার রক্ষা বা সমৃদ্ধি। আর অনুবাদের শরীরে ভাষাকে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত করার দায় লেগেই আছে। এ প্রসঙ্গে ‘কবিতার অনুবাদ’ প্রবন্ধে সুস্মাত গঙ্গোপাধ্যায় বলছেন – “অনুবাদ যেন মূল রচনার দ্বৈতসত্তা, সে মূলের অস্তিত্বকে শুধু প্রলম্বিত করে না, তাকে কখনও মূলের বিপন্নও করে।”<sup>১</sup> অর্থাৎ অনুবাদে মূলের রক্ষা হয় না। এই বক্তব্যের নিরিখে বিপন্নভাষা রক্ষায় অনুবাদের ভূমিকা অনেকটা অপ্রাসঙ্গিক হিসেবে উঠে আসে। আবার উৎস ভাষা যদি বিপন্ন ভাষা হয়, তাহলে তো কথাই নেই। কিন্তু বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলি থেকে অনুবাদ প্রক্রিয়া আর পাঁচটা সাধারণ চর্চার থেকে স্বতন্ত্র হয়ে ওঠে, তার ‘ভাষিক বিপন্নতা’র কারণে। বিষয়টি আলোচনা করা যাক।

### ২.০ বিপন্ন ভাষার চর্চার মাধ্যম হিসেবে অনুবাদ

অনুবাদ ভাষা-সংস্কৃতি চর্চার হাতিয়ার। এই চর্চার মধ্য দিয়ে কোনো সংকটাপন্ন ভাষা-সংস্কৃতির বিপন্নতার মাত্রা স্বাভাবিকভাবেই কম হতে পারে। বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলোর মধ্যে থাকা যে কোনো ভাষাকে চর্চা বা সুস্থির করার

<sup>১</sup> Corresponding Author: [debdeepdhibar@gmail.com](mailto:debdeepdhibar@gmail.com)

পরিকল্পনা নিয়ে, আমরা যদি কোনো ভাষার অনুবাদ করি তাহলে ভাষায়-ভাষায় বিপন্নতার মাত্রা কমতেই থাকে। তবুও বিপন্নতার বিপক্ষে লড়াই অনেকের মনে প্রথমে একধরনের চাপ সৃষ্টি করতে পারে। যা প্রতিরোধের প্রতি পদক্ষেপেই পরিলক্ষিত হয়। অতএব সে ক্ষেত্রে আমাদের এ ধরনের দুশ্চিন্তা না করাই ভালো। এই দুশ্চিন্তা সরিয়ে চর্চাই ভাষা রক্ষার একমাত্র পথ। আগে বলেছি, আবারো বলছি সবসময়ের জন্য যে কোনো বিষয়কে সঠিক পথে পরিচালনা করতে হলে তার চর্চা করাটা ভীষণ জরুরী। বিপন্ন ভাষা ও অনুবাদের পারস্পরিক সম্পর্ক তেমনি একটি পথ। এ জন্য দূরের কাছের সব ধরনের ভাষার সঙ্গে বিপন্ন ভাষার ঘনিষ্ঠ সম্পর্ক বজায় রাখা অনুবাদকের প্রধান লক্ষ্য। অনুবাদে লক্ষ্য ভাষা যেমন তার লক্ষ্য ও উদ্দেশ্য অর্জনে সফলকাম হয়, উৎস ভাষাও তেমনি সন্তুষ্টি অনুভব করে। অনুবাদ দুই ভাষার সম্পর্ক রক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে কোনো কিছু বাধ্যবাধকতা দাবি করে না। অনুবাদক কোন দুটি ভাষার মধ্যে অনুবাদ করবেন এটা তাঁর জানার ওপর নির্ভর করে। এবং মানুষ কতটা গ্রহণ করবে সেটা মানুষ নিজে নিজেই ঠিক করে নেয়। এটি এক ধরনের স্বয়ংক্রিয় পদ্ধতি। এক্ষেত্রে সামাজিক অবস্থা তাকে বাধ্য করতে পারে না। বরং অনুবাদ বিপন্ন ভাষার সঙ্গে ক্ষমতাশালী ভাষার সম্পর্ক স্থাপনের ক্ষেত্রে পুষ্টি দান করে।

আমরা সাধারণ অনুবাদের (বা সম্পন্ন ভাষা থেকে আরেক সম্পন্ন ভাষায় অনুবাদের) যে প্রক্রিয়া তাকে অনুসন্ধান করলে দেখব, বিপন্ন ভাষার যে অনুবাদ, তার অনেকগুলো জায়গা সম্পন্ন ভাষার মতো সাধারণ ভাষার অনুবাদ প্রক্রিয়ার মধ্যে ক্রিয়াশীল। উল্টো দিক থেকে বিপন্ন ভাষা থেকে সাধারণ যে কোনো ভাষায় অনুবাদের যে প্রক্রিয়া সে সম্পর্কে আমরা জানতে পারবো। কেননা অন্য ভাষার অনুবাদে আমরা সাধারণ যে প্রচলিত অনুবাদ তার অনেক প্রক্রিয়া এখানে দেখতে পায়। বিপন্ন ভাষার চর্চা বা সচেতনতা প্রজ্ঞা, যুক্তি এবং আবেগের উপর নির্ভরশীল। সে ক্ষেত্রে দেখা যাচ্ছে এটি সাধারণ ভাষার মতো একটি ভাষা। একে যত্ন এবং রক্ষা করা জনসমাজের তথা সকলের কর্তব্য। এই চেতনার মধ্য দিয়ে ভাষা রক্ষা পায়। অনুবাদ এই চিন্তা-চেতনাকে আরেকটু উসকে দেয় বা এগিয়ে নিয়ে যায়। এবং তাকে সমাজের সর্বস্তরের সঙ্গে পরিচয় করিয়ে দেওয়ার ক্ষমতা রাখে। এই পরিচিতি করানোর প্রচেষ্টা অনুবাদের সহজাত। অর্থাৎ পরিচিতি না করিয়ে অনুবাদ বাড়তেই পারে না, এবং বিপন্ন ভাষার পরিচিতি করণই বেশি জরুরি। এই উদ্দেশ্যে একটা পরস্পরের মধ্যে নিবিড় সম্পর্ক গড়ে ওঠে। কিন্তু বিপন্ন ভাষার সঙ্গে অনুবাদের সম্পর্ক শুধুমাত্র যুক্তি বা কর্তব্য নির্ভর নয়। কোনো কোনো ক্ষেত্রে তা আবেগ অনুভূতি নির্ভর।

অনুবাদের আগে কোনো বিপন্ন ভাষা নিয়ে মানুষের ভাবনা চিন্তা যে রকম ভাবে থাকে, অনুবাদের পর সেই ভাবনা চিন্তায় কিছু পরিবর্তন দেখা যেতে পারে। ধরা যাক কোনো অনুবাদের পর সেই উৎস ভাষা হিসেবে বিপন্ন ভাষাটি যদি না থাকে, তাহলে পূর্ববর্তী বিপন্ন ভাষার যে স্বরূপ তা অনুবাদের মধ্য দিয়ে থেকে যায় বা রক্ষা পায়। অথচ বিপন্ন থেকে বিলুপ্ত হয়ে যাওয়া ভাষা-সংস্কৃতির সঙ্গে বর্তমানে সংযোগ স্থাপন করা খুব একটা সহজ ব্যাপার নয়। কিন্তু অনুবাদ এই সংযোগ স্থাপনের সহজতর মাধ্যম। সেই বিপন্ন ভাষা যে গোষ্ঠীর মধ্যে যতই সীমাবদ্ধ থাকুক, সেই সীমাবদ্ধতার সীমা অতিক্রম করে অনুবাদ তাকে একটা অবস্থায় নিয়ে যায়। তার ফলে, তা আরও অনেক ভাষার সম্পদ হয়ে ওঠে। এই সম্পদগুলো থেকে আমরা উৎস ভাষার স্বরূপ চিনতে পারি। বিপন্নতা যখন কোনো ভাষাকে ক্রমশ গ্রাস বা ক্ষীণতর করতে থাকে তখন আমরা সেই ভাষার অর্থ বা গুরুত্বকে খুঁজতে চাই। এবং এই গুরুত্বের নিরিখেই আমরা ভাষার উপর সাধারণত মানুষের আসক্তির কারণ নির্ণয় করি। এই আসক্তির কারণ যদি অনুভব করি, তাহলে মনের মধ্যে সেই ভাষাকে জানার বা সেই ভাষার মধ্যে বাঁচার একটা ক্ষেত্র তৈরি হয়। এরকম অবস্থায় অনুবাদ আমাদের সাহায্য করতে পারে। অনুবাদের মধ্য দিয়েই বিপন্ন ভাষা সংস্কৃতির সঙ্গে অন্যান্য ভাষার সংযোগ স্থাপন এবং সম্পর্ক তৈরির সহজতর সাধন প্রক্রিয়া।

বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদ তিনভাবে হতে পারে— ক. ক্ষমতামূলী ভাষা থেকে বিপন্ন ভাষায়, খ. বিপন্ন ভাষা থেকে ক্ষমতামূলী ভাষায় ও গ. এক বিপন্ন ভাষা থেকে আরেক বিপন্ন ভাষায়। আমরা ‘বিপন্ন ভাষা থেকে ক্ষমতামূলী ভাষা’র অনুবাদ প্রক্রিয়া নিয়ে আলোচনা করবো। যাতে তিন শ্রেণির ভূমিকা লক্ষণীয় – ১. সাংগঠনিক ভূমিকা, ২. প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক ভূমিকা ও ৩. ব্যক্তিগত ভূমিকা। বিশ্বের অনেক বিপন্ন ভাষা এখনো লিখিত অনুবাদের আওতায় আসেনি। অর্থাৎ মৌখিক অনুবাদ ছাড়া সেগুলি অন্য কোনো ভাষায় অনূদিত হয়নি বা অন্য কোনো ভাষা থেকে সেগুলিতে অনূদিত হয়নি। বাদবাকি যে ভাষাগুলোর অনুবাদ হয়েছে বা যে ভাষাগুলোতে অনুবাদ হয়েছে, সেগুলিতেও উচ্চ-নিচ ভেদ রয়েছে। বিষয়টিকে ছকের সাহায্যে দেখলে বুঝতে পারবো –

অনুবাদে বিপন্ন ভাষার ভূমিকা	রীতি
অনুবাদে যে সমস্ত বিপন্ন ভাষা উৎস ও লক্ষ্য ভাষা হিসেবে ব্যবহৃত হয়	মৌখিক ও লিখিত
	মৌখিক
	লিখিত
অনুবাদে যে সমস্ত বিপন্ন ভাষা শুধুমাত্র উৎস ভাষা হিসেবে ব্যবহৃত হয়	মৌখিক ও লিখিত
	মৌখিক
	লিখিত
অনুবাদে যে সমস্ত বিপন্ন ভাষা শুধুমাত্র লক্ষ্য ভাষা হিসেবে ব্যবহৃত হয়	মৌখিক ও লিখিত
	মৌখিক
	লিখিত
যে বিপন্ন ভাষায় কোনো ধরনের অনুবাদই হয় না	কোনো রীতি অনুসৃত হয়নি।

বিপন্ন ভাষার বাংলা অনুবাদগুলিও এই ছকটির ব্যতিক্রম নয়।

### ৩.০ ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলির বাংলা অনুবাদ

ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলি চর্চার সাপেক্ষে অনুবাদের ভূমিকা যথেষ্ট পরিমাণে লক্ষ্য করা যায়। প্রাপ্ত বিপন্ন ভাষার সাহিত্যের বাংলা অনুবাদগুলি বিপন্ন ভাষা চর্চার উল্লেখযোগ্য দৃষ্টান্ত। এক্ষেত্রে বাংলা অনুবাদে পূর্ববর্তী চর্চাকৃত কয়েকটি বিপন্ন ভাষা বহুল চর্চিত, এবং কয়েকটি অচর্চিত ভাষাও সাম্প্রতিক চর্চার আলোয় এসেছে। অবশ্য এখনো অনেকগুলি বিপন্ন ভাষা অচর্চার অন্ধকারেই থেকে গেছে। এর আগে বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলি থেকে অনুবাদগুলি হওয়ার কারণগুলিকে বোঝা দরকার।

### ৩.১ বিপন্ন ভাষা থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদের কারণ

মাইকেল ক্রাউস (১৯৯২), রবার্ট ডিক্সন (১৯৯৭) এবং ডেভিড ক্রিস্টালের (২০০০) মত বিশ্বের অগ্রণী ভাষাবিজ্ঞানীরা একসময় ভবিষ্যদ্বাণী করে বলেছিলেন, আগামী ১০০ বছরের মধ্যে পৃথিবীর প্রায় ৭০০০ জীবিত ভাষার ৯০ শতাংশ বিলুপ্ত হবে। তাঁদের হিসেবে বিশ্বের ৯৬ শতাংশ ভাষায় বর্তমানে কথা বলে মাত্র ৪ শতাংশ মানুষ। এর মানে পৃথিবীর ভাষাবৈচিত্র্যের বিপুল বৃহদংশ রক্ষার ভার খুব কম সংখ্যক মানুষের হাতে রয়েছে।<sup>১</sup> এবং একটি ভাষার মৃত্যুর সঙ্গে সঙ্গে মানব অভিজ্ঞতার অনন্য একটি প্রকাশরূপের মৃত্যু ঘটে। একই সঙ্গে বিজ্ঞান, ভাষাতত্ত্ব, চিকিৎসা, নৃতত্ত্ব, প্রাক-ইতিহাস, মনস্তত্ত্ব, সমাজতত্ত্ব, ইতিহাস, মহাকাশভাবনা, বাস্তবতত্ত্ব, আধ্যাত্মিকতা ও ধর্মচর্চার নির্দিষ্ট ভাষাবিশ্বত অনন্য জ্ঞান হারিয়ে যায়। তাকে আর ফিরিয়ে আনা যায় না।<sup>২</sup> এই ধরনের ভয়াবহ অবস্থার কল্পনা বিপন্ন ভাষা চর্চার প্রধান কারণ। অর্থাৎ বিপন্ন ভাষাচর্চার পিছনে যে

সমস্ত কারণগুলি ক্রিয়াশীল, সেগুলি অনুবাদ চর্চার কারণ হিসেবেও সমান কার্যকর। এছাড়া আরও কিছু কারণ লক্ষ্য করা যায়। সেগুলি হল –

- সচেতনতা
- প্রাচীন ঐতিহ্যকে ধরে রাখার প্রচেষ্টা
- ব্যক্তিগত উদ্যোগ
- প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক প্রয়াস
- রাজনৈতিক সুযোগ সুবিধা
- ইউরোকেন্দ্রিক মানসিকতা
- প্রকৃতি ও পরিবেশগত সচেতনতা
- ভাষা বৈষম্যে ঐক্যতা
- গবেষণা
- সমাজ সংস্কারক মূলক মানসিকতা
- সামাজিক সহাবস্থানের প্রয়োজনীয়তা ইত্যাদি।

এছাড়াও আমরা আমাদের অনুসন্ধানে যে সমস্ত অনুবাদের পরিচয় পেয়েছি সেগুলির কারণ হিসেবে সাহিত্যিক উৎকৃষ্টতা, সামাজিক উপযোগিতা ইত্যাদিও বেশ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। বিপন্ন ভাষার বাংলা অনুবাদে আরেকটা বিষয় উঠে আসে তা হল সহিষ্ণুতা। এ প্রসঙ্গে বিপ্লব বিশ্বাস ‘প্রসঙ্গ : অনুবাদ সাহিত্য’ প্রবন্ধে বলেছেন– “ভারতীয় সাহিত্যকে চরিশুঃ করে দিগ্বিদিক ছড়িয়ে দিতে একমাত্র মোক্ষম অস্ত্র হল অনুবাদের সহায়তা। ... বাঙালি পাঠক ওড়িয়া, অসমিয়া কিম্বা দক্ষিণ ভারতীয় শক্তিশালী সাহিত্যের কিছুই জানবে না এ এক জাতীয় নিষ্ঠুর চিন্তাধারা মাত্র এর থেকেই জন্ম নেয় একধরনের উন্মাদিক অনীহা। জাতীয় সংহতি বিনষ্ট করে একই ভৌগোলিক সীমারেখার মানুষকে নিষ্কিপ্ত করে এক একটি বিচ্ছিন্ন দ্বীপে।”<sup>৪৮</sup> বা নবনীতা দেবসেন ‘বাদ অনুবাদ’ প্রবন্ধে যখন বলছেন– “একসময়ে খুবই জরুরি ছিল বিদেশের সাহিত্যগুলো দেশের ভাষাতে নিয়ে আসা, আমাদের জানানোর পরিসর বাড়ানো, দিগন্তকে বিস্তৃত করা। এখনও একই কারণে বিশেষভাবে জরুরি হয়ে উঠেছে ভারতীয় ভাষার সাহিত্যগুলি অন্যান্য ভারতীয় ভাষাতে অনুবাদ করা, যাতে আমরা পরস্পরের আসল মুখগুলি, যোগসূত্রগুলি চিনে নিতে পারি। যে যার নিজস্ব আয়নায় নিজের পাশেই প্রতিবেশীর মুখটি দেখতে পাই। যাতে আমাদের ভারতীয়ত্বের পরিসর বাড়ে, মূল আরও গভীরে নামে।”<sup>৪৯</sup> ভারতীয় বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলির বাংলা অনুবাদের ক্ষেত্রেও কথাটি সমভাবে প্রযোজ্য। অনুবাদ এক্ষেত্রে বিপন্ন ভাষা সংস্কৃতির ধারণাকে ধারণ করে গড়ে ওঠে। এবং অনুবাদের মধ্যে বিপন্ন ভাষা তার পরিধিকে বৃদ্ধি করে। এথেকে আমরা বিপন্ন ভাষার বিপন্নতা সম্বন্ধে উদ্বেগ অনেক অংশে কমাতে পারি। এই ধরনের অনুবাদ চর্চায় প্রথমত যেটা লক্ষণীয় সেটা হল ভাষিক নিরপেক্ষতা। উক্ত নিরপেক্ষতা ক্ষমতামূলক ও বিপন্ন উভয় ধরনের ভাষার উপর ভিত্তি করে গড়ে ওঠে। অর্থাৎ উৎস ও লক্ষ্য উভয় শ্রেণীর ভাষায় নিরপেক্ষভাবে গড়ে উঠেছে। যে পরিচয়ে বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদ বর্তমানে সাধিত হচ্ছে বা অতীতে হয়েছে। তা অনুবাদকের গভীর অনুশীলনের বিষয়। এই অনুবাদকল্পে প্রধান প্রধান প্রকাশনা বা বিদ্বতজনের চাইতে সাধারণের আকর্ষণ কম নয়। একে বলতে পারি সাধারণের সংঘটন। অতএব বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলির অনুবাদ চর্চা বিশিষ্টতা থেকে মুক্ত হয়ে গুরুত্বের প্রয়োজনে সাধারণের জন্য সাধারণ চর্চা হয়ে ওঠেছে। বাংলা অনুবাদে এই চর্চার স্বরূপ নির্মানের জন্য ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলি থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদের প্রেক্ষাপট আলোচনা করব।

### ৩.২ বিপন্ন ভাষা থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদের প্রেক্ষাপট

বিপন্ন ভাষা-সাহিত্যের বাংলা অনুবাদগুলি হওয়ার পেছনে একটি সুস্পষ্ট প্রেক্ষাপট চিহ্নিত করা যায়। বঙ্গ ‘বিপন্ন ভাষা’ হিসেবে চিহ্নিত ভাষাগুলির মধ্যে যেগুলো প্রাচীনে রাজশক্তির অধিকারী ছিল, সেগুলির অনুবাদের সূচনা সম্ভবত প্রাচীনকাল থেকেই। কিন্তু আমাদের কাছে এখনো পর্যন্ত কোনো সুনির্দিষ্ট প্রমাণ

নেই। অন্যদিকে মৌখিক অনুবাদের প্রাচীনতা নির্ণয় সম্ভব নয়। কিন্তু এক্ষেত্রে অনুমানযোগ্য বহু ভাষীকতার কারণে বঙ্গ আগে থেকেই মৌখিক অনুবাদ পরম্পরার প্রচলন ছিল। অন্যদিকে বাংলা অনুবাদ চর্চায় ক্ষমতাসালী ভাষা-সাহিত্যগুলির চর্চা একচেটিয়া ভাবে চলে আসছে সেই পঞ্চদশ শতক থেকেই। তা সে সাহিত্য, ইতিহাস, দর্শন, বিজ্ঞান যেকোনো চর্চার ক্ষেত্রেই হোক না কেন। কিন্তু অন্ধকারে পড়ে থাকা আমাদের ‘আদিভাষা’গুলি অনালোচিত হতে হতে ক্রমশ হয়ে উঠেছে ‘বিপন্ন’। অথচ এককালে এরাই ছিলো ক্ষমতাবান ভাষাগোষ্ঠীর অন্যতম। সেই ‘চর্যাগীতি’তে প্রাপ্ত আদিবাসী ছবি একান্তে হয়ে উঠেছে ধূসর ফ্যাকাশে। বাংলা অনুবাদ তাঁদের ভাষা-সাহিত্য আলোচনার তেমনি এক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ মাধ্যম। বাংলা অনুবাদ চর্চায় বিপন্ন ভাষা-সাহিত্য চর্চার বহুলাংশ আজ আদিবাসী ভাষার মধ্যেই বয়ে চলেছে। এর কারণ নির্ধারণের জন্য বঙ্গের অন্যান্য বিপন্ন ভাষীদের ভাষার অবস্থান ও অবস্থা অত্যন্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। এই বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদগুলি বাংলা ভাষা-সাহিত্যের নবতম সংযোজন। কিন্তু ‘বিপন্ন ভাষা’ শিরোনামের আগে বিপন্ন ভাষাভুক্ত কয়েকটি ভাষার বাংলা অনুবাদ উনিশ শতকের মধ্যভাগ থেকেই শুরু হয়। সেদিনের বাঙালি জনমানসে সেগুলির বেশিরভাগ ‘আদিবাসী’দের ভাষা-সাহিত্য হিসেবেই সর্বাধিক পরিচিত ছিল। কিন্তু সেই অনুবাদগুলির সংখ্যা ছিল খুবই সামান্য। আমরা আগের অধ্যায়ে দেখেছি বঙ্গভূমি বহুভাষার আবাসস্থল। বহু ভাষা থাকার কারণে বাংলায় অনুবাদ একটি সাধারণ প্রক্রিয়া। এক্ষেত্রে বর্তমানের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলিরও মৌখিক অনুবাদ সাধারণভাবেই সংগঠিত হয়েছে। এই অনুবাদ ধারণাকে আমরা প্রাথমিকভাবে মৌখিক পরম্পরা সঙ্গেই যুক্ত বলে মনে করি। সাধারণ জীবন চালনায় বহু ভাষার প্রয়োগই মৌখিক অনুবাদের প্রেক্ষাপট কে চিহ্নিত করে।

বঙ্গের প্রাগৈতিহাসিক যুগের ইতিহাস দেখলে দেখি, এখানে অস্ট্রিক, দ্রাবিড়, আর্য ও মঙ্গোলীয় প্রভৃতি গোষ্ঠীর লোকেরা সময়ে সময়ে এসেছে। এবং বসবাস করেছে। এই বসবাসকালে তাদের ভাষা ব্যবহারের মাধ্যম নিয়ে প্রশ্ন উঠানো যায়। অর্থাৎ এই আলাদা আলাদা ভাষাগোষ্ঠীর মানুষদের পারস্পরিক মত বিনিময়ের মাধ্যম কী ছিল? উত্তরে নিশ্চয়ই করে বলা না গেলেও অনুবাদের অস্তিত্বের কথা অনুমান করা যেতেই পারে। অবশ্যই সেটি মৌখিক থেকে মৌখিক অনুবাদ। বাংলা অনুবাদ সাহিত্যের আজকে যে বীজবান বিস্তার তার প্রথম পর্ব বা উৎস খুঁজতে গেলে গ্রামবাংলার লোকসাহিত্যের কথকতা, পালাগান ইত্যাদির মধ্যে প্রথম বাংলা অনুবাদ সাহিত্যের অভিব্যক্তি ধরা পড়ে। এই সাহিত্যিক পরম্পরায় সেই সময়ের অনার্য, শূদ্র মানুষগুলির সাহিত্য যে মুখেমুখে অনূদিত হয়নি, তা বলা যায় না। দেশীয় সাহিত্যের নীতিকথা ও রূপকথাগুলি এভাবেই মৌখিক অনুবাদের মধ্য দিয়ে ধীরে ধীরে ছড়িয়ে পড়েছে। ধর্মীয় ক্ষেত্রে বিপন্ন ভাষা অনুবাদেরও অনুমান করা যায়। বর্তমান বিপন্ন ভাষীদের ভোট-চিন বা ভোট তিব্বতি জীবনে বৌদ্ধ ধর্মের প্রভাব পরম্পরাটি অনুমান করলে দেখব, বৌদ্ধ পণ্ডিতগণ সম্ভবত অনুবাদের মাধ্যমে তাদের ধর্মাস্তরিত করেছিলেন। এ প্রসঙ্গে সুনীতিকুমার চট্টোপাধ্যায় তাঁর ‘ভারতের বিভিন্ন নৃ-জাতি এবং ভাষাগোষ্ঠী ও ভাষা-ঐতিহাসিক সিংহাবলোকন’ প্রবন্ধে লিখেছেন- “ভারতীয় বৌদ্ধ সাহিত্যের অনুবাদকে আধার করিয়া ভোট ভাষায় সাহিত্য-রচনা আরম্ভ হয়। কিন্তু ভারতবর্ষে আগত ও উপনিবিষ্ট অন্য ভোট-চীন উপজাতিগুলি সভ্যতার নিতান্ত পশ্চাৎপদ ছিল, ভারতের সভ্যতার গঠনে ইহাদের দান তেমন লক্ষণীয় ছিল না।”<sup>৬</sup> অনুরূপভাবে ইউরোপীয় মিশনারিগণ খ্রিস্টান ধর্মের প্রচার-প্রসারের স্বার্থে বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলির বেশ কয়েকটি ভাষার অনুবাদ করেছেন। অর্থাৎ ধর্মান্তরনের ক্ষেত্রে তারা প্রথম মৌখিক অনুবাদেরই সাহায্য নিয়েছিলেন। পরবর্তীকালে অনেকগুলি বিপন্ন ভাষার মৌখিক সাহিত্যের অনুবাদ করেছেন। এ প্রসঙ্গে সুনীতিকুমার চট্টোপাধ্যায় তাঁর ‘ভারতের বিভিন্ন নৃ-জাতি এবং ভাষাগোষ্ঠী ও ভাষা-ঐতিহাসিক সিংহাবলোকন’ প্রবন্ধে লিখেছেন- “উনবিংশ শতকের দ্বিতীয়ার্ধে ইউরোপীয় খ্রীষ্টান শাস্ত্র অনুবাদ করিয়া এবং ইহাদের মধ্যে প্রচলিত পুরাণ-কাহিনী ও লোক-কথা এবং গীত প্রভৃতি মৌখিক সাহিত্য সংগ্রহ করিয়া, এইসব ভাষার একটা সাহিত্যিক প্রকাশের চেষ্টা হয়। কোল ভাষাগুলিতে- বিশেষতঃ সাওতালীতে- কতকগুলি সুন্দর পুরাণ-কথা ও

রূপ-কথা পাওয়া গিয়াছে- দুমকার স্কান্ডিনেভীয় মিশনারিদের চেষ্টায় ইউরোপ (নয়ওয়ে ও ডেনমার্ক) হইতে এগুলির রোমান অক্ষরে মূল ও ইংরেজী অনুবাদ প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে; এবং সাওতালী, মুন্ডারী ও হো ভাষায় (বিশেষতঃ মুন্ডারীতে) অতি মনোরম ছোট-ছোট গীতি-কবিতা মিলে, সেগুলির কিছু কিছু সংগ্রহ, অনুবাদ ও আলোচনা হইয়াছে।<sup>১৭</sup> এছাড়া উৎপলকুমার বসু ইংরেজদের অনুবাদ-চর্চা সম্পর্কে ‘অনুবাদের আনন্দ’ প্রবন্ধে লিখছেন – “১৮০০ খ্রিস্টাব্দের আগে-পরে, ইউরোপীয়রা ভারতবর্ষে স্থিতি হয়ে বসার কিছু আগে থেকে, এবং পরবর্তী দীর্ঘ সময় জুড়ে অনুবাদ-সরস্বতীকে প্রধানত দুটি কারণে আহ্বান করা হত। প্রথমত, ভারতবাসীকে বশে রাখার একটি সম্ভাব্য উপায় হিসেবে এবং দ্বিতীয়ত, ধর্মাস্তরকারের প্রয়োজনে...।<sup>১৮</sup> বিপন্ন ভাষীদের (তৎকালীন আদিবাসী) ক্ষেত্রেও বক্তব্যটি সমভাবে প্রযোজ্য। এই পরম্পরা ভারতে ইংরেজ শাসনকালে ধারাবাহিকভাবে চলছিল।

ইংরেজরা চলে যাওয়ার পর বঙ্গের আদিবাসীদের অস্তিত্ব ও অধিকারের প্রসঙ্গ ধীরে ধীরে মাথাচাড়া দিয়ে উঠতে থাকে। প্রয়োজন হয় আদিবাসীদের জীবনচর্চা ও ভাষা সংস্কৃতিকে নিবিড়ভাবে জানার। এই জানার তাগিদে একদল মানুষের আবির্ভাব ঘটে, তারা আদিবাসীদের সাহিত্য (ক্ষেত্র বিশেষে) বাংলায় অনুবাদ করেছিলেন। অন্যদিকে আদিবাসী সমাজগুলিতে যে সমস্ত আদিবাসী মানুষ শিক্ষিত হচ্ছিলেন, তারাও তাদের কথা শোনানোর জন্য অনুবাদের শরণাপন্ন হয়েছেন। বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলি থেকে অন্য কোনো ভাষায় অনুবাদ একটি সাধারণ বিষয়। ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলির বাংলা অনুবাদ মৌখিক রূপেই প্রথম পাওয়া যায়। এর কারণ দ্বিভাষিকতা বা বহুভাষিকতা। প্রকৃতপক্ষে দ্বিভাষিকতা বা বহুভাষিকতা বঙ্গীয় ধাঁচের অন্যতম বৈশিষ্ট্য। দৈনন্দিন জীবন ধারনে (সংবাদপত্র, সিনেমা, বই, দূরদর্শন, রেডিয়ো, স্কুলগুলি, অফিসগুলি, আদালতগুলি প্রভৃতিতে) বঙ্গ বহুভাষার প্রয়োগ রয়েছে। বহু ভাষা-সংস্কৃতি অনুবাদের সম্পদ এবং সাংস্কৃতিক প্রাচুর্যের একটি ক্ষেত্র। বহুভাষার কারণে যারা একটির বেশী ভাষা জানেন তারা কেবল ভাষা ব্যবহারে দক্ষই নন, সামাজিক দিক থেকে তাঁরা আরো সংবেদনশীল ও সহিষ্ণু। উভয় বঙ্গের মানুষ অনেক পরিস্থিতিতেই দুই বা তার বেশী (অনেক ভাষা) একটা অন্যটার সাথে মিশিয়ে কথা বলে। এইভাবেই অনুবাদের প্রেক্ষাপট আরও মজবুত হয়ে ওঠে। বঙ্গভূমির প্রায় আদিবাসী ব্যক্তি তার মাতৃভাষা ছাড়াও কমপক্ষে একটি বা দুটি ভাষা জানেন। তারা সহজেই তার প্রত্যেকদিনের কাজে এই ভাষাগুলি ব্যবহার করতে সমর্থ হন। এ থেকে বিপন্ন আদিবাসী ভাষাগুলির অনুবাদের উৎস সূচিত হয়। এছাড়া গবেষণার স্বার্থে বিভিন্ন গবেষক আদিবাসী বিষয়ক বহু তথ্য যেমন তুলে ধরেছিলেন, তেমনি তাঁদের সাহিত্যের অনুবাদও করেছিলেন। অর্থাৎ ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলির বাংলা অনুবাদের সূচনা আদিবাসী চর্চার মধ্য দিয়ে। আজকে সেগুলির বেশিরভাগ বিপন্ন ভাষা হিসেবে চিহ্নিত। এই আদিবাসী ভাষাগুলির বাংলা অনুবাদ চর্চা ক্রমান্বয়িক ভাবে হয়েছে এমনটা নয়। এই অনুবাদ-চর্চাগুলি আংশিক, খণ্ডিত তথা বিক্ষিপ্ত। এই বিপন্ন ভাষার বাংলা অনুবাদের ক্রমান্বয়িক ইতিহাস লক্ষ্য করা যায় ২০০০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ পরবর্তী সময়ে। এবং ইউনেস্কোর আদিবাসী অধিকার, মাতৃভাষা চর্চা ও বিপন্ন ভাষা চর্চায় জোর দিলে বাঙালিরাও বিপন্ন ভাষা চর্চায় উৎসাহ পায়। অর্থাৎ ইউনেস্কোর বিপন্ন ভাষা চিহ্নিত করার পর থেকে বঙ্গও বিপন্ন ভাষা-সংস্কৃতি চর্চার ক্রমান্বয়িক ইতিহাসের সূত্রটি পরিলক্ষিত হয়। এর পেছনে ভাষাতাত্ত্বিক কারণ ছাড়াও নৃতাত্ত্বিক, সাংস্কৃতিক, অর্থনৈতিক, রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক ইত্যাদি অনুষঙ্গ আদিবাসী তথা বিপন্ন ভাষীদের আলোচনা ইতিহাসটি বাংলা অনুবাদের প্রেক্ষাপটকে দৃঢ় করেছে। তাছাড়া এত ভাষাগোষ্ঠী আমরা দেখতে পেতাম না। এরকম হবার কারণ অনুসন্ধানে ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষা-সাহিত্যের বাংলা অনুবাদের পরিকল্পনাগুলি পর্যালোচনা করা প্রয়োজন।

### ৩.৩ ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলি থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদের পরিকল্পনা

বঙ্গের বিপন্ন ভাষীদের সাহিত্য অনুবাদের আগ্রহ বাংলা ভাষায় অত্যন্ত কম। আবার যেগুলি হয়েছে সেগুলিতে যে কয়েকটি অসুরক্ষিত ভাষার অনুবাদ হয়েছিল, সেগুলিরই অনুবাদ হয়ে চলেছে বারংবার।



সেগুলি ছাড়া অন্য কোনো বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদ সংখ্যা খুব কম। তপোধীর ভট্টাচার্য ‘অনুবাদের নন্দন’ প্রবন্ধে আদিবাসী সাহিত্যের অনুবাদ সম্বন্ধে বলেছেন – “অনুবাদচর্চা ভারতে বিশল্যকরণীর সম্মান দিতে পারত। অবহেলিত উত্তরপূর্ব ভারতে জাতি-উপজাতি ভাষার উদ্যান গড়ে তুলেছে; সেদিকে দৃষ্টিপাত যদি করা হত, নিঃসীম বিচ্ছিন্নতাবোধ কিছুটা হলেও উপশম হত। অনুবাদ তাত্ত্বিকদের দৃঢ় প্রত্যয় : উদ্দিষ্ট ভাষার সাহিত্য-পরিসরে অনুবাদের প্রতিক্রিয়া বহুমুখী। এতে নান্দনিক ও ঐতিহাসিক-সামাজিক নিষ্কর্ষও রয়েছে।”<sup>৯</sup> উনিশ শতকের পূর্ববর্তী সময়ে বিপন্ন ভাষী আদিবাসীদের বাংলা অনুবাদ আমরা খুব একটা পাই না। তবুও সাঁওতালি, মুন্ডারি, কোল, গারো, মনিপুরী, হাজং, ত্রিপুরী ইত্যাদি ভাষার সাহিত্য সংস্কৃতি তথা অনুবাদের আলোচনা ক্রমাগত বাড়তে থাকে। কিন্তু আদিবাসী চর্চার সূচনালগ্নে মিসমি, কুকি, নাগা ইত্যাদি ভাষা-সংস্কৃতির চর্চা সমস্থানের অধিকারী ছিল। কিন্তু জনসংখ্যা, রাজনীতি, অর্থনীতি তথা সামাজিক অবস্থানের নিরিখে অসুরক্ষিত ভাষাগোষ্ঠীগুলির চর্চা দীর্ঘতর হতে থাকে। ভারতীয় বিপন্ন ভাষীদের সাহিত্যের বাংলা অনুবাদে প্রায় ৭০টি ভাষার চর্চা আমাদের নজরে এসেছে। সেগুলি হল - অঙ্গামি/আংগামি, অসুরি, আও, হুসো বা আকা, আদি, আন্দামানিজ, ওংগে, ওয়াংছো, ককবরক, কাছাড়ি, কার্বি বা মিকির, কুকি, কুড়মালি, কুমাওনি, কুরুখ, কোইরেংগ, কোচ, কোটা, কোড়া, খাসি, খেড়িয়া, গাডোয়ালি, গাদাবা, গারো, গেতা, গোন্ডি, চাকমা, ছাখেসাং, জিমি, টোটো, ড্রুকপা/ডিজংখা/ভুটিয়া, তাগিন, তামাঙ, তিব্বতি, ধিমাল, নাগা, নিশি, পাঁচপর্ণগনিয়া, পাওয়ি, বিরহড়, বিষুপ্রিয়া মণিপুরী বা মণিপুরী বিষুপ্রিয়া, বেদিয়া, বৈগানি, বোডো ও মেচ, বোন্দো, ভূমিজ, মগ বা মারমা, মারা/লখের, মালতো [কুমারভাগ পাহাড়িয়া, সাউরিয়া পাহাড়িয়া, মালপাহাড়িয়া], মাহালি, মিজো বা লুসাই, মিরি বা মিসিং, মিসমি, মুণ্ডারি, মৈতৈ, শ্রো/শ্রু, রাজবংশী, রাভা, রিয়াং, রোঙ বা লেপচা, লিম্বু, লোধি বা লোধা, শবর, শেরপা, সিংফৌ, সেমা, হাজং, হালাম, হো প্রভৃতি। এবং এই ভাষাগুলির বাংলা অনুবাদে প্রায় ২৭৫ জন অনুবাদক যুক্ত থেকেছেন। দীর্ঘদিন ধরেই অসুরক্ষিত ভাষাগুলি থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদ নিয়ে বিভিন্ন অনুবাদকরা উৎসাহ দেখিয়েছেন। এই পরিকল্পনায় ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলি থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদের পরিধি কীভাবে বিকশিত হয়েছে তা লক্ষ্য করব।

### ৩.৪ বাংলা অনুবাদে ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষা-চর্চা

বাংলা অনুবাদে ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষার চর্চা (১৯৪৬-২০১৯) সম্পর্কিত ধারণা লাভ করতে গিয়ে বিপন্ন ভাষার প্রতি বাংলা অনুবাদকদের শ্রদ্ধাবোধ অধিকতর প্রকাশিত হয়েছে। দেখা গেছে যে, তারা নিরলসভাবে তাদের উপলব্ধি ও পর্যবেক্ষণ প্রকাশ করে চলেছেন। এই অনুবাদগুলির সংখ্যা কমপক্ষে ছয় হাজারের বেশি। এই পরিমাণ রচনা নির্ণায়ক সঙ্গ্রে পাঠ করে কোনো সুনিশ্চিত মতামত প্রকাশ করা সময়সাপেক্ষ। সেক্ষেত্রে একটি সূচী তৈরি করলে সেই অনুভূতির গূঢ়ত্ব বুঝতে পারব। এই অনুবাদ চর্চার প্রকাশিত গ্রন্থগুলিকে কালানুক্রমিকভাবে উল্লেখ করে আলোচনা করা যেতে পারে। আলোচনার সুবিধার্থে বিষয়টিকে চারটি পর্যায়ে বিভাজিত করা হয়েছে। প্রথম পর্যায় : ১৯৪৬-১৯৯৯, দ্বিতীয় পর্যায় : ২০০০-২০০৯, তৃতীয় পর্যায় : ২০১০-২০১৯ ও চতুর্থ পর্যায় : ২০২০। প্রথম পর্যায়ের সময় বিস্তৃত। দ্বিতীয় ও তৃতীয় পর্যায়ের বিভাজন দশক-ভিত্তিক। কিন্তু চতুর্থ পর্যায়ের ২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দে কয়েকটি অনুবাদই পাওয়া গেছে।

#### ৩.৩.১ প্রথম পর্যায় : ১৯৪৬-১৯৯৯ খ্রিঃ

এপর্বে প্রকাশিত গ্রন্থ পাঁচটি— অরুণ মৈত্রের ‘সিকিমের আদিবাসী লেপচা’ (১৯৬১), আবদুস সাত্তারের ‘আদিবাসী সংস্কৃতি ও সাহিত্য’ (১৯৭১), ত্রিপুরা উপজাতি গবেষণা কেন্দ্রের ‘ত্রিপুরার রূপকথা’ (১৯৮০), বীণা মিশ্রের ‘পূর্বচলের রূপকথা’ (১৯৯১) কুমুদ কুণ্ডু চৌধুরীর ‘ত্রিপুরার রূপকথামালা কেরেঙ কথমা’ (১৯৯৮) ও সাইফুর রহমান চৌধুরীর ‘পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রামের উপজাতি’ (১৯৯৯) ইত্যাদি। এছাড়া দুটি প্রবন্ধ সুনীতিকুমার

চট্টোপাধ্যায়ের ‘কোল-জাতির সংস্কৃতি’ (১৯৪৬) ও বিমলেন্দু মজুমদারের ‘টোটে জনজাতির আর্থ-সামাজিক বিবর্তন ও সংস্কৃতি’ (১৯৯৯)।

### ৩.৩.২ দ্বিতীয় পর্যায় : ২০০০-২০০৯ খ্রিঃ

পূর্ববর্তী পর্যায়ের তুলনায় এ-পর্বে অনুবাদ চর্চা শুধু পরিমাণের দিক থেকে নয়, বিষয় বৈচিত্র্যেও ব্যাপ্ত। এ-পর্যায়ে আমাদের অনুবাদকদের প্রায় ৩৯টি রচনা প্রকাশিত হয়েছে। গ্রন্থ প্রকাশকাল অনুসারে তাঁরা হলেন - কৃষ্ণ দাসের ‘আদিবাসী ত্রিপুরার লোককথা লোকগীতি প্রবাদ-প্রবচন ও ধাঁধা’ (২০০০), দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদারের ‘আদিবাসী লোককথা’ (২০০১), কুমুদ কুণ্ডু চৌধুরীর ‘ককবরক ভাষা সাহিত্য’ (২০০১), মুহম্মদ আবদুল জলিলের ‘উত্তরবঙ্গের আদিবাসী লোকজীবন ও লোকসাহিত্য ওরাওঁ’ (২০০১), মহাশ্বেতা দেবীর (সংকলক ও সম্পাদনা) ‘ভেরিয়ার এল্যুইন নির্বাচিত রচনা’ (অনুবাদ) (২০০১), বেণু দত্তরায়ের (সংকলন ও সম্পাদনা) ‘উত্তর বাংলার লোকসংগীত’ (২০০২), কুমুদ কুণ্ডু চৌধুরীর ‘ত্রিপুরী টোটম ককবরক প্রবাদ ও অন্যান্য’ (২০০২), নির্মল দাশের ‘ত্রিপুরার লোককথা’ (২০০২) সুরেন দেববর্মণের ‘ত্রিপুরার উপজাতি সংস্কৃতি’ (২০০২), তপন রায় প্রধানের ‘রাজবংশী লোককথা’ (২০০৩), নির্মল দাশের ‘ত্রিপুরার লোকসংস্কৃতি ও অন্যান্য প্রসঙ্গ’ (২০০৩), চন্দ্রকান্ত মুড়াসিং-এর ‘ককবরক লোকসংগীত ও কবিতা’ (২০০৩), কাজী গোলাম গউস সিদ্দিকীর ‘ত্রিপুরা উপজাতির উপকথা’ (১৪১০ বঙ্গাব্দ/২০০৩), কুমুদ কুণ্ডু চৌধুরী, নরেশচন্দ্র দেববর্মা ও মনোজ দেববর্মার ‘পাহাড়ের কোলে’ (২০০৪), রবীন্দ্রকিশোর দেববর্মার ‘ককবরক ধাঁধা’ (২০০৫), জ্যোতির্ময় দাশের (অনুবাদক) ‘মণিপুরি কবিতা’ (১৪১২ বঙ্গাব্দ/ ২০০৫), দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদারের ‘পশ্চিমবঙ্গের আদিবাসী লোককথা’ (২০০৬), নিরঞ্জন চাকমা ও রঘুনাথ সরকারের (সম্পাদনা) ত্রিপুরার আদিবাসী লোককথা (২০০৬), রমেশ ভগতের ‘নিধন’ (২০০৬), রণজিত সিংহের ‘মণিপুরী রূপকথা’ (২০০৬), মাযহারুল ইসলাম তরুর ‘আদিবাসী লোকজীবন’ (২০০৭), শোভা ত্রিপুরার ‘ত্রিপুরা জাতি’ (২০০৭), প্রমোদ নাথের ‘উত্তরবঙ্গের আদিবাসী জনজীবনে বিয়ের গান’ (২০০৭), মাযহারুল ইসলাম তরুর ‘বাংলাদেশের আদিবাসী সংস্কৃতি’ (২০০৮), নন্দলাল শর্মার (সম্পাদক) চাকমা কবিতা (২০০৮), জহর আচাজীর ‘পুরাতনী ত্রিপুরা’ (২০০৮), ধনঞ্জয় রাজকুমারের তিনটি বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া মণিপুরী কবিতার অনুবাদ (২০০৮), তিনটি বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া মণিপুরী কবিতার অনুবাদ (২০০৮), মহাশ্বেতা দেবীর (অনুবাদক) ‘ভারতের লোককথা’ (২০০৯), ওয়াংখেম বীরমঙ্গলের ‘শরতচন্দ্র থিয়ামের শ্রেষ্ঠ কবিতা’ (২০০৯), মাহফুজুর রহমান ‘সিলেট অঞ্চলে নৃ-তাত্ত্বিক ও ক্ষুদ্র জনগোষ্ঠী’ (২০০৯), হাফিজ রশিদ খানের ‘আদিবাসী জীবন আদিবাসী সংস্কৃতি’ (২০০৯), ওইনাম নীলকণ্ঠ সিংহের ‘বৃষ্টি আর হল না’ (২০০৯), মাযহারুল ইসলাম তরুর ‘গারো ও হাজং সম্প্রদায়ের লোকসাহিত্য’ (২০০৯), ধীরেন্দ্রনাথ বাস্কের ‘আদিবাসী রূপকথা’ (২০০৯), শুভাশিস সিনহার ‘সাতজন সমকালীন বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া মণিপুরী কবির কবিতা/ মণিপুরী সাহিত্য সংগ্রহ’ (২০০৯) ও ‘ধনঞ্জয় রাজকুমারের আরো দুইটি কবিতার অনুবাদ’ (২০০৯), কুঙ্গ থাঙের ‘পৌরেই’ (২০০৯), ‘একটি সমকালীন বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া মণিপুরী ছোটগল্পের অনুবাদ’ (২০০৯), ‘জোনাকি’ (২০০৯) ও ‘সত্তরের দশকের বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া মণিপুরী কবিতা’ (২০০৯) ইত্যাদি।

২০০০ খ্রিস্টাব্দের পরবর্তী বঙ্গভূমিতে ‘বিপন্ন ভাষা’র চর্চা নানাদিক থেকে বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে। সেই সঙ্গে বিভিন্ন বিপন্ন ভাষাগুলির বাংলা অনুবাদ লক্ষ্য করবার মতো। বঙ্গীয় অনুবাদকেরা বিপন্ন ভাষার সাহিত্য-সংস্কৃতির বিকাশের জন্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অবদান রেখেছেন বা রেখে চলেছেন। উক্ত চর্চা যে ক্রমশ বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে এবং পাচ্ছে সে বিষয়ে সন্দেহ নেই।

### ৩.৩.৩ তৃতীয় পর্যায় : ২০১০-২০১৯ খ্রিঃ

অনুবাদচর্চায় এ-পর্যায়ের অগ্রগতি ও বৈচিত্র্য পূর্ববর্তী পর্যায়দুটির তুলনায় ও অধিকতর স্বাচ্ছন্দ্য। এ-পর্ব থেকে আমাদের গৃহীত গ্রন্থের সংখ্যা ৬৫টি। সেগুলি হল- অনুকূল সিংহের ‘উত্তর পূর্বাঞ্চলের লোককথা’ (২০১০),

দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদার ও অরুণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়ের (সম্পাদক) ‘সারা পৃথিবীর রূপকথা’ (২০১০), রাজকুমার ভূবনম্বা’র (সম্পা.) ‘তরঙ্গ ও আকাশ’ (২০১০), দিলীপকুমার রায় ও প্রমোদ নাথের (সম্পাদনা) ‘লোকাযত আঙিনায় উত্তরবঙ্গ’ (২০১০), নরেশচন্দ্র দেববর্মা, বিমান ধর, ও কুমুদ কুণ্ডুচৌধুরী সম্পাদিত ‘ত্রিপুরার আদিবাসী’ (২০১০), সুশীল কুমার রাভার ‘রাভা সমাজে নৃত্য- গীতের প্রাসঙ্গিকতা ও নারীর ভূমিকা’ (২০১০), অতীক মজুমদার ও সায়ন্তন দাশগুপ্তের ‘লেপচা লোকসাহিত্য’ (২০১১), রঞ্জিত দাশের ‘নৃত্যের আলোকে বেদিয়া জনজাতি’ (২০১১), অনুবাদ পত্রিকা (১৪১৮/২০১১), প্রমোদ নাথের তামাঙ’ (২০১১), অনুকূল সিংহের ‘বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া মণিপুরী লোককথা’ (২০১১), গৌর বৈরাগীর ‘দুখু আর সুখু’ (২০১১), দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদারের ‘আদিবাসী প্রেমের লোককথা’ (২০১২), বরুণকুমার চক্রবর্তীর (সম্পাদনা) ‘লোককথার সাতকাহন’ (২০১২), সুব্রত মুখোপাধ্যায়ের ‘বোড়ো গল্প সংকলন’ (২০১২), এল বীরমঙ্গল সিংহের ‘মণিপুরি লোককথা’ (ফুঙ্গাওয়াঁরী) (২০১২), লালথলুয়াংলিয়ানা থিয়াংতে ও উৎপলকুমার বসুর (সম্পাদনা) ‘মিজো গান, আধুনিক কবিতা ও লোককথা’ (২০১২), প্রমোদ নাথের ‘লিঙ্গু জনগোষ্ঠীর বিবাহ উৎসব’ (২০১২), প্রবীর সরকারের (সঙ্কলন/সম্পাদনা) ‘রাঙামাটির লোককথা পুরুলিয়া’ (২০১২), সাইফুল আহসান বুলবুলের ‘বাংলাদেশের পার্বত্যঞ্চলের নৃ-তাত্ত্বিক জনগোষ্ঠী’ (২০১২), কুমার প্রীতিশ বলের ‘ত্রিপুরা জাতির কথা’ (২০১২), অম্বিতা আবিবর (কমলিকা চক্রবর্তী অনূদিত) ‘আন্দামানের একটি প্রাচীন গল্প’ (২০১৩), দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদারের ‘আদিবাসী মিথকথা’ (২০১৩), ‘আদিবাসী পশুকথা’ (২০১৩) ও ‘আদিবাসী মিথকথা’ (২০১৩), বিপ্লব চক্রবর্তীর ‘ভারতীয় উপকথা’ (২০১৩) কুমুদ কুণ্ডু চৌধুরীর ‘কেরেঙ কথমা’ (২০১৩), প্রশান্ত রক্ষিতের (সংকলক ও অনুবাদক) ‘শবর লোকগান ও লোককথা’ (২০১৩), প্রমোদ নাথের ‘উত্তরবঙ্গের সীমান্ত’ (২০১৩), হিমেল বরকতের (সম্পাদনা) ‘বাংলাদেশের আদিবাসী কাব্যসংগ্রহ’ (২০১৩), কুমার প্রীতিশ বলের ‘মারমা জাতির কথা’ (২০১৩) ও ‘লুসাই জাতির কথা’ (২০১৩), প্রমোদ নাথের ‘উত্তরবঙ্গের আদিবাসী লোককথা’ (২০১৪), দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদারের ‘আদিবাসী রূপকথা’ (২০১৪), নির্মল দাশের ‘ত্রিপুরার লোককথা’ (২০১৪) ও ‘ত্রিপুরার উপজাতি লোকসংস্কৃতি’ (২০১৪), ক্যারোলিন আর মারাকের (সংকলন ও সম্পাদনা) ‘প্রাচীন ও আধুনিক গারো সাহিত্য’ (২০১৪), ইসকরা-র ‘ভারতকথা’ (২০১৪), মানিক দাস ও সন্দীপন ভট্টাচার্যের (সম্পাদনা) ‘কার্বি লোককথা’ (২০১৪), শেফালী দেববর্মার ‘কেরাং কথমা সিচাই তঙগ/রূপকথা জেগে আছে’ (২০১৪), মৃণালচন্দ্র হালদারের ‘জনজাতি লোখা : একটি লোকসংস্কৃতিক নিরীক্ষা’ (২০১৪), মহেন্দ্র দেবনাথের ‘উত্তরবঙ্গের প্রান্তভূমির জনজাতি’ (২০১৪), রণজিত সিংহের ‘বাংলাদেশের মণিপুরী : সমাজ ও সংস্কৃতি’ (২০১৪), দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদারের ‘আঙনের মিথকথা’ (২০১৫), নন্দকুমার দেববর্মার ‘কেরাং দি গ্রোট’ (২০১৫), ওইনাম নীলকণ্ঠ সিংহের ‘ধূলি ও ধবজা’ (২০১৫), মাহহারুল ইসলাম তরুর ‘উত্তরাঞ্চলের নৃ-গোষ্ঠী : সমাজ ও সংস্কৃতি’ (২০১৫), শ্যামলাল দেববর্মার ‘ককবরক সাহিত্য ও সংস্কৃতি, স্মৃতি ও মূল্যায়ণ পর্যালোচনা’ (২০১৫), সালেক খোকনের ‘বাংলাদেশের আদিবাসী/কড়া জাতি’ (২০১৫), মুকুল কুমার ঘোষের ‘ত্রিপুরার কুকি’ (২০১৫), রবীন্দ্র কিশোর দেববর্মার ‘ককবরক প্রবাদ বাক্যে তিপ্রা লোকজীবন’ (২০১৫), নির্মল দাশের ‘ত্রিপুরার ভালো লাগা লোককথা’ (২০১৬), দিব্যজ্যোতি মজুমদারের ‘আদিবাসী নীতিকথা’ (২০১৬), রবীন্দ্র কুমার দত্তের ‘ত্রিপুরার লোকপ্রিয় মৌখিক গল্প’ (২০১৬), চন্দনা সাহার ‘আদিবাসী সংগীত: পটভূমি মালদহ’ (২০১৬), সালেক খোকনের ‘ভিন্ন জাতির লোকজ উৎসব’ (২০১৬), ও ‘আদিবাসী পুরাণ’ (২০১৭), নিংখোখোংজম দিলীপ কুমারের ‘গতিহারা স্রোত’ (২০১৭), গণেশ দেবী (মুখ্য সম্পাদক), শংকর প্রসাদ সিংহ ও ইন্দ্রনীল আচার্যের (সম্পাদক) ‘ভারতীয় ভাষা লোক-সর্বস্বপ্ন পশ্চিমবঙ্গের ভাষা’ (খন্ড ৩১ ভাগ ৩) (২০১৭), প্রমোদ নাথের ‘উত্তরবঙ্গের আদিবাসী লোককথা’, এন. রঞ্জিতা সরকারের ‘আধুনিক মণিপুরী কবিতা’ (২০১৭) ও ‘রতন থিয়ামের কবিতা’ (২০১৭), সালেক খোকনের ‘আদিবাসী বিয়েকথা’ (২০১৮), ইয়াংঙান স্রোর ‘স্রো রূপকথা’ (২০১৮), এন. রঞ্জিতা সরকারের ‘শরতচন্দ্র থিয়াম নির্বাচিত কবিতা’ (২০১৯) ও ‘অরাম্বব ওংবী মেমচৌবী শ্রেষ্ঠ কবিতা’ (২০১৯), সব্যসাচী পাহাড়ীর ‘বাংলাদেশের আদিবাসী লোককথা’ (বাংলাদেশ/২০১৯), বিপ্লব নায়ক, সত্যজিৎ টোটো ও ধনীরাম টোটোর

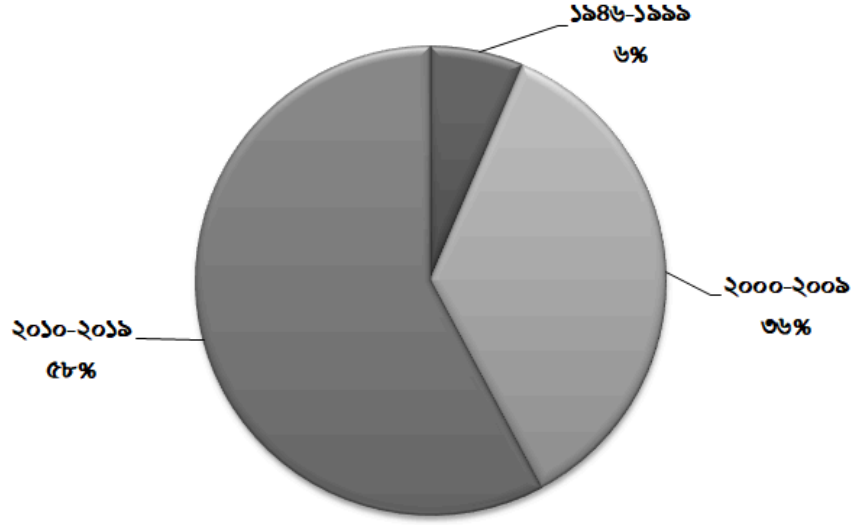
‘টোটোজাতির কথা’ (২০১৯), জেমস্ জনর্শ চিরানের ‘প্রান্তিক সমাজের কথা প্রসঙ্গ: গারো ও হাজং জনসমাজ’ (২০১৯), এল বীরমঙ্গল সিংহের ‘মণিপুরি লোককাহিনি’ (২০১৯) ইত্যাদি।

### ৩.৩.৪ চতুর্থ পর্যায় : ২০২০ খ্রিঃ

করোনার কারণে ২০২০ খ্রিঃ বিপন্ন ভাষা থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদ মুদ্রিত বইপত্রের সংখ্যা খুব কম। তবুও এই বছর যে কয়েকটি বই চোখে পড়েছে, সেগুলির মধ্যে কয়েকটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বই হল – নীপা চৌধুরীর ‘মুণ্ডা সম্প্রদায়ের সমাজ ও সংস্কৃতি’ (২০২০), লীনা জাম্বিলের ‘গারোদের উৎপত্তি, সমাজ ব্যবস্থা, কৃষ্টি-সংস্কৃতি, বিবাহ প্রথা’ (২০২০), মেজবাহ উদ্দিন তুহিনের ‘গারো’ (২০২০) ইত্যাদি। এছাড়া অনলাইনে প্রকাশিত সালেক খোকনের কয়েকটি আদিবাসী লোককথা- ‘জীবন পেল চন্দ্র-সূর্য’ (১২-০৩-২০২০), ‘টিয়ার জন্য কাঁদলো সবাই’ (২৯-০৩-২০২০), ‘ভাইয়ের ভালবাসায় প্রাণ ফিরে পায় বোনটি’ (০৩-০৪-২০২০), ‘ঘটককে বাঘে খায় না’ (১০-০৪-২০২০), ‘লক্ষ্মী ফিরে সংসারে’ (১৪-০৪-২০২০), ‘পাখির সঙ্গে লড়াই’ (২৮-০৪-২০২০), ‘ভাগ্য দেবতার খোঁজে’ (০৪-০৫-২০২০), ‘সিন্দুর যেভাবে এলো’ (২৩-০৫-২০২০), ‘মায়ের বোন নদী’ (২৭-০৬-২০২০), ‘স্বপ্নে যখন বিছানা ভেজাতো ডুংগা’ (২৭-০৬-২০২০), ‘রাজকন্যার ধমকই বজ্রপাত’ (১৪-০৮-২০২০), ‘গরু বিষয়ক একটি আদিবাসী লোককথা’ (১৪-০৮-২০২০), ‘রানি ও তার আধফোটা ফুল’ (১৪-০৮-২০২০), ‘পৃথিবী সৃষ্টির ইতিহাস’ (১২-০৯-২০২০) ইত্যাদি যথেষ্ট গুরুত্বের দাবিদার।

১৯৯৯ খ্রিস্টাব্দে ইউনেস্কো বিপন্ন ভাষা প্রকল্প শুরু করেন। এই প্রকল্পে বিপন্ন ভাষাভাষী (কম ব্যবহৃত বা কম জনসংখ্যা যুক্ত ভাষা) মানুষগুলির ভাষা নিয়ে বিভিন্ন মাধ্যমে চর্চা শুরু হয়। বিপন্ন ভাষাচর্চার যে সমস্ত মাধ্যম রয়েছে সেগুলির মধ্যে অনুবাদ একটি কার্যকরী মাধ্যম। এই অনুবাদের উদ্দেশ্যগুলি হল ভাষাগুলির চর্চাকে বৃদ্ধি করা। তাদের সাহিত্য-সংস্কৃতি সংরক্ষণ করা এবং ভাষাগুলির ব্যবহার বাড়ানো, একই সঙ্গে ভাষাগুলির উন্নতি ঘটানো। ইউনেস্কোর বিপন্ন ভাষার এই সংরক্ষণ ও পুনরুজ্জীবন প্রকল্প বিষয়ে আমরা আগের অধ্যায়ে আলোচনা করেছি। এবং আমরা সেখানে দেখেছি, বঙ্গ বহু আগে থেকেই ভাষাগুলির চর্চা হয়ে আসছে। যদিও সেগুলির সংখ্যা ছিল খুবই কম। এ বিষয়ে পথপ্রদর্শক হিসেবে কাজ করেছেন বিভিন্ন ভাষাবিজ্ঞানী, নৃতাত্ত্বিক, অনুবাদক ও বিভিন্ন সমাজসেবী সংস্থা। আমরা দেখেছি ১৯৪৭ খ্রিঃ পরবর্তী সময়ে সুনীতিকুমার চট্টোপাধ্যায়, অরুণ মৈত্র, আবদুস সাত্তার, ধীরেন্দ্রনাথ বাস্ক, সুহদকুমার ভৌমিক, কুমুদ কুণ্ডুচৌধুরী, সাইফুর রহমান চৌধুরী, বিমলেন্দু মজুমদার প্রমুখ। তবুও সাধারণ জনমানসে এই চর্চা বিশেষ প্রভাব ফেলতে পারেনি। ২০০০ খ্রিঃ পরবর্তী সময়কাল থেকে তা উত্তরোত্তর বৃদ্ধি পেয়ে আসছে। আমরা দেখেছি আমাদের প্রাপ্ত অনুবাদগুলির বইগুলির মধ্যে মাত্র ৫ থেকে ৬ শতাংশ এই সময় পর্বে অনূদিত হয়েছিল। কিন্তু পরিমাণের দিক থেকে তা ১ শতাংশের বেশি নয়। ২০০০ খ্রিঃ পরবর্তী সময়কালে এ ছবিটি আস্তে আস্তে পাল্টে যেতে শুরু করে। এবং ভারত তথা বঙ্গের বিভিন্ন শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠান, গবেষণা কেন্দ্র ও এ বিষয়ে চর্চাকারী মানুষদের মধ্যে প্রবল আকারে চর্চা শুরু হয়। পশ্চিমবঙ্গ তথা বঙ্গভূমিতে এই চর্চা খুব দ্রুততার সঙ্গে এগিয়ে গেছে। এবং ২০১০ খ্রিঃ পরবর্তী সময়ে সেগুলির পরিমাণ আরো বেড়ে গেছে। শুধু অনুবাদকই নয় ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদগুলির পেছনে আরেক শ্রেণীর হাত আছে, তাদের নাম না করলে আলোচনা অসম্পূর্ণ থাকে। সেটি হল, প্রকাশনা বিভাগ। এই প্রকাশকদের প্রচেষ্টাও কম নয়! তাঁদের ঐকান্তিক প্রচেষ্টা বিপন্ন ভাষার থেকে বাংলা অনুবাদগুলিকে সাফল্যমণ্ডিত করে তুলতে যথেষ্ট সাহায্য করেছে। বিশেষ করে, লোকসংস্কৃতি ও আদিবাসী সংস্কৃতি কেন্দ্র (কলকাতা), সাহিত্য অকাদেমি (নতুন দিল্লী), পশ্চিমবঙ্গ বাংলা অকাদেমি (কলকাতা), মারাং বুরু প্রেস (মেদিনীপুর) ইত্যাদি। শুধু মাত্র বাজার নয় বাজারের ভেতরেও একটা মন মানসিকতা তা এই প্রকাশনাগুলির কাজ দেখলেই বোঝা যায়। অন্যান্য বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদ চর্চার ক্ষেত্রেও এই প্রকাশনা বিভাগগুলির কাছে আশা রাখা যেতে পারে।

১৯৪৬-২০১৯-এ পরিসীমা তিন দশকের অধিক। এই দীর্ঘ পরিসরে সামগ্রিকভাবে বাংলা অনুবাদচর্চার



চিত্র-০১ : বাংলা অনুবাদে ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষা চর্চার ক্রমবিকাশ: ১৯৪৬-২০১৯

যে-পরিচয় মেলে তা মোটেও কম নয়। আমাদের আশ্রিত গ্রন্থসংখ্যাকে ১০০ শতাংশ হিসেবে ধরলে আমরা দেখি যে, প্রথম পর্যায়ে আমাদের অর্জন ছিল শতকরা ৬ শতাংশ, দ্বিতীয় পর্যায়ে বৃদ্ধি পেয়ে হয়েছে ৩৬ শতাংশ এবং তৃতীয় পর্যায়ে তা বেড়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে ৫৮ শতাংশে। সে-হিসেবে আমরা অনেক দূর এগিয়েছি। কিন্তু তা আত্মপ্রসাদ লাভের মতো যথেষ্ট নয়। অনেকগুলি বিপন্ন ভাষার সাহিত্য-সংস্কৃতির উৎকর্ষের সঙ্গে আমরা এখন অনেকটাই পরিচিত। কিন্তু পরিমাণের দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে অনেকগুলি বিপন্ন ভাষার বাংলা অনুবাদে দুই-দশটার বেশি এগিয়ে যেতে পারিনি। এই আদিবাসী ভাষাগুলির অনুবাদ চর্চা ক্রমান্বয়িক ভাবে হয়েছে এমনটা নয়। এই অনুবাদ-চর্চাগুলি আংশিক, খন্ডিত তথা বিক্ষিপ্ত। এছাড়া বাংলা ভাষার সামগ্রিক অনুবাদের তুলনায় বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদ খুবই কম।

## ৪.০ সিদ্ধান্ত

অনুবাদকের দায়-দায়িত্বকে ‘সম্ভাবনা’ যুক্ত করতে এই গবেষণার অবতারণা। এতক্ষণ পর্যন্ত আমরা ভারতের বিপন্ন ভাষা চর্চায় বাংলা অনুবাদের চর্চা-কৃত পরিধি দেখলাম। এগুলি ভালো না মন্দ সেই প্রশ্ন পাঠকের পাঠ প্রণালী বা রুচির উপর নির্ভরশীল। আর আলোচনার দিক থেকে উপযুক্ত তথ্যের অভাবে ভারতের অনেক বিপন্ন ভাষীদের সাহিত্যের বাংলা অনুবাদগুলি এখানে স্থানাভাবে আলোচনা করতে পারলাম না। অনেকগুলি বিপন্ন ভাষার ক্ষেত্রে বাংলা অনুবাদ ‘সম্ভব নয়’ এই অভিজ্ঞতা এসে আটকা পড়ে। বোধহয় সমাজ জীবনের নানা অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে জ্ঞান জগতের যাত্রাপথে বিপন্ন ভাষার সাহিত্যগুলির আবির্ভাব। এই অভিজ্ঞতামূলক সাহিত্যগুলি যেহেতু সমাজ পরম্পরায় বহমান সেহেতু সমাজেরই নানা কারণের স্থানিক ও কালিক বিচ্যুতি মৌখিক সাহিত্যগুলিকেও বিভিন্নতা জোগাতে থাকে যা বিপন্ন ভাষার বাংলা অনুবাদগুলিতে খুব সামান্যই ধরা পড়ে। কোনো কোনো অনুবাদক বিপন্ন ভাষীদের বাসভূমি থেকে সাহিত্য সংগ্রহ করলেও তাঁর সাহিত্য সংগ্রহ ও নির্বাচনে বৈচিত্র্যময়তার সন্মুখীন হয়েছেন। কেননা একই পাঠ নানা মৌখিক পাঠের নৈকট্য ও দূরবর্তী জনিত চর্চা অনুবাদকের নির্বাচন প্রতিক্রিয়ায় যে দ্বন্দ্বিকতার সৃষ্টি করে তা পাঠকের চোখ এড়িয়ে যায় না। এত সমস্যা থাকতেও বাংলা অনুবাদ তার অবস্থান বদলেছে, অথবা ক্রমাগত বদলে চলছে। এর মধ্যে বর্তমান বিপন্ন ভাষা-সাহিত্যের অবস্থান; আমাদের জ্ঞান ও আনন্দের চেতনাকে বদলে দেয়। বিপন্ন ভাষীদের সাহিত্য অনুবাদের অর্থবোধ, চিত্রময়তা, সাংস্কৃতিক ভাবগ্রহন ইত্যাদি অন্যান্য সাহিত্য অনুবাদের তুলনায় বদলে যায়।

বাংলা সাহিত্যে বিপন্ন ভাষার অনুবাদগুলিও এর ব্যতিক্রম নয়। সে যেমন মৌখিক থেকে লিখিত রূপে ছড়িয়ে দিয়ে নিজেকে করেছে প্রসারিত, তেমনি অন্যান্য ভাষার মৌখিক সাহিত্য-সম্পদ গ্রহণ করে নিজের শক্তি বাড়িয়ে তুলছে। লিখিত হয়ে উঠেছে শক্তিমান। ফলে অনুবাদ পরিমণ্ডলে মৌখিক ও লিখিত এ দুটি স্রোতকে মিলিয়ে দেয়। আমাদের না বুঝতে পারা কোনো ভাষার মৌখিক সাহিত্য থেকে অনুবাদকদের নির্মিত লিখিত সাহিত্যে ভাব-ভাবনা স্থায়ী রূপ ধারণ করে। সঙ্গে সঙ্গে ভাষায় ভাষায় আগ্রাসী মনোভঙ্গীকেও বাদ দেওয়া চলে না, সেটাকেও আমাদের গ্রহণ করতে হয়। এককথায় যোগাযোগের মাধ্যমেই অনুবাদের সূচনা। এখানে বক্তা শ্রোতার মধ্যে থেকে যাওয়া বক্তব্যই বিভিন্নতা পায়। প্রত্যেক বক্তব্যের মধ্যে একধরনের মোড়ক থাকে। সেই বক্তব্যের মোড়ক যারা খুলতে পারে তারাই হলেন শ্রোতা। এক্ষেত্রে শুধু ভাষা নয়, সংস্কৃতিগত বিভিন্নতাও এর মধ্যে বয়ে চলে। যতক্ষণ পর্যন্ত আমরা তা না খুলতে পারছি ততক্ষণ আমরা বিপন্ন ভাষা-সাহিত্যের ব্যুহভেদ করতে পারবো না। আগামী দিনের বাংলা অনুবাদক ও বিপন্ন ভাষা-ভাষী মানুষদের মিলিত প্রচেষ্টায় ও চর্চার মধ্য দিয়ে বাংলা ভাষার অনুবাদ ক্ষেত্রে বিপন্ন ভাষা প্রতিষ্ঠিত হবে এই আশা রাখি।

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## Non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman Languages

*Basavaraja Kodagunti<sup>1</sup>*

*Central University of Karnataka, Karnataka*

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### ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to analyse the statistical data of non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages in India. The paper has discussed the languages, mother tongues under each language, number of speakers, and it has attempted to show the geographical spread of these languages. Tibeto-Burman languages are widely and thickly spread in the seven states of North East India and extended to the states which share the border of China. This information helps to understand the settlements and movement of the communities in the remote past, also to consider these languages for various government policies like mother tongue education, bilingual-multilingual classrooms etc.

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## 1. Introduction

The 2011 Indian census has listed one hundred and twenty one languages and 19,569 Mother Tongues in India. Twenty two languages are scheduled and others are non-scheduled. There are five major language families listed in the census, and Tibeto-Burman is the fourth biggest family in terms of number of speakers. However, it is the biggest family in terms of the number of languages that are listed in the Indian census. There are sixty six languages from the Tibeto-Burman family reported in the 2011 Indian census. Two of them namely Bodo and Manipuri have been enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup> schedule of Indian constitution.

This paper is an attempt to understand the non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages, mother tongues, number of speakers, and geographical spread of these languages across the country. This analysis helps understanding the states in which non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages are located. This is very important information for several studies like understanding the history of the languages and communities, their geographical settlements and movement in the remote past. On the other hand, this analysis is very much useful in various aspects of the present, like mother tongue education, bilingual and multilingual classrooms and in various language related government policies, also in social activities including media, entertainment etc.

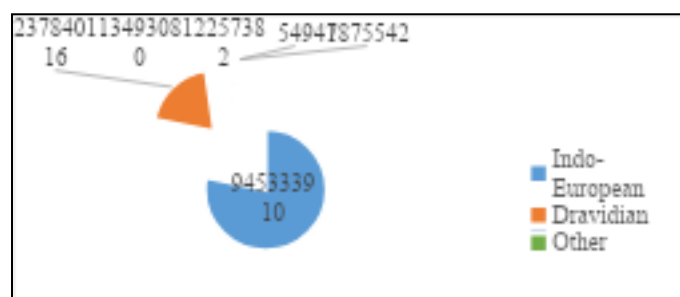
The details of language families as recorded in the 2011 census are provided at first.

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [bkodagunti@gmail.com](mailto:bkodagunti@gmail.com)

## 2. Language families and percentage of speakers in India

Language Family	Sub-Group	Number of Languages	Number of Speaker	%
Indo-European				
	Indo-Aryan	21	94,50,52,555	78.05
	Iranian	1	21,677	0.00
	Germanic	1	2,59,678	0.02
Dravidian		17	23,78,40,116	19.64
Austro-Asiatic		14	1,34,93,080	1.11
Tibeto-Burman		66	1,22,57,382	1.01
Semeto-Hematite		1	54,947	0.00
Total		121	1,20,89,79,435	99.85
Other Languages		--	1,875,542	0.15%
<b>Total</b>			<b>1,210,854,977</b>	<b>100%</b>



## 3. Tibeto-Burman Languages

Tibeto-Burman languages that are found in the census along with the mother tongues are listed below. Numbers that are assigned by the census are retained while listing the languages.

Languages	Speakers of Language
<b>Scheduled Languages</b>	
3 BODO	14,82,929
Bodo/Boro	14,54,547
Kachari	15,984
Mech/Mechhia	11,546
3 Others	852

12 MANIPURI	17,61,079
Manipuri	17,60,913
12 Others	166
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>32,44,008</b>
<b>Non-Scheduled Languages</b>	
23 ADI	2,48,834
Adi	1,10,307



Adi Gallong/Gallong	29,246
Adi Miniyong/Miniyong	13,344
Talgalo	69,256
23 Others	26,681,
25 ANAL	27,217
Anal	24,301
25 Others	2,916
26 ANGAMI	1,52,796
Angami	40,721
26 Others	1,12,075
27 AO	2,60,008
Ao	1,19,549
Chungli	70,782
Mongsen	69,094
27 Others	583
29 BALTI	13,774
Balti	13,654
29 Others	120
31 BHOTIA	2,29,954
Bhotia	1,20,583
Bauti	1,00,000
31 Others	9,371
34 CHAKHESANG	19,846
Chakhesang	19,846
35 CHAKRU/CHOKRI	91,216

Chakru/Chokri	91,216
36 CHANG	66,852
Chang	66,852
38 DEORI	32,376
Deori	32,376
39 DIMASA	1,37,184
Dimasa	1,33,327
39 Others	3,857
42 GANGTE	16,542
Gangte	16,542
43 GARO	11,45,323
Garo	11,25,359
43 Others	19,964
46 HALAM	38,915
Halam	26,534
46 Others	12,381
47 HMAR	98,988
Hmar	98,988
51 KABUI	1,22,931
Kabui	54,220
Rongmei	68,706
51 Others	5
52 KARBI/MIKIR	
Karbi/Mikir	5,28,503
56 KHEZHA	41,625
Khezha	36,383

56 Others	5,242
57 KHIEMNUNGAN	61,983
Khiemnungan	61,968
57 Others	15
59 KINNAURI	83,561
Kinnauri	83,427
59 Others	134
61 KOCH	36,434
Koch	33,962
61 Others	2,472
64 KOM	15,108
Kom	15,108
66 KONYAK	2,44,477
Konyak	2,44,477
71 KUKI	83,968
Kuki	82,049
71 Others	1,919
73 LADAKHI	14,952
Ladakhi	14,952
74 LAHAULI	11,574
Lahauli	11,162
74 Others	412
76 LAKHER	42,429
Mara	38,671
76 Others	3,758
77 LALUNG	33,921

Lalung	33,921
78 LEPCHA	47,331
Lepcha	47,331
79 LIANGMEI	49,811
Liangmei	48,388
79 Others	1,423
80 LIMBU	40,835
Limbu	38,067
80 Others	2,768
81 LOTHIA	1,79,467
Lotha	1,79,467
82 LUSHAI/MIZO	8,30,846
Lushai/Mizo	8,25,900
82 Others	4,946
84 MAO	2,40,205
Mao	97,195
Paola	1,43,001
84 Others	9
85 MARAM	32,460
Maram	32,460
86 MARING	25,814
Maring	25,814
87 MIRI/MISHING	6,29,954
Miri/Mishing	6,29,954
88 MISHMI	44,100
Mishmi	15,871

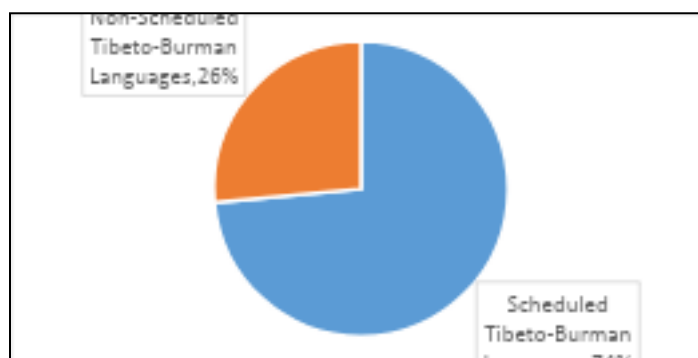
88 Others	28,229
89 MOGH	36,665
Mogh	36,652
89 Others	13
90 MONPA	13,703
Monpa	13,703
94 NISSI/DAFLA	4,06,532
Apatani	44,815
Nissi/Dafla	2,89,166
Tagin	62,897
94 Others	9,654
95 NOCTE	
Nocte	29,810
95 Others	1,029
96 PAITE	79,507
Paite	79,443
96 Others	64
98 PAWI	28,639
Pawi	28,639
100 PHOM	54,416
Phom	54,416
101 POCHURY	21,654
Pochury	21,568
101 Others	86
102 RABHA	1,39,986
Rabha	1,39,985

102 Others	1
103 RAI	15,644
Rai	10,427
103 Others	5,217
104 RENGMA	65,328
Rengma	65,328
105 SANGTAM	76,000
Sangtam	75,684
105 Others	316
107 SEMA	10,802
Sema	10,802
108 SHERPA	16,012
Sherpa	16,012
111 TAMANG	20,154
Tamang	20,154
112 TANGKHUL	1,87,276
Tangkhul	1,87,263
112 Others	13
113 TANGSA	38,624
Tutcha Tangsa	10,234
113 Others	28,390
114 THADO	2,29,340
Thado	2,27,114
114 Others	2,226
115 TIBETAN	1,82,685
Tibetan	83,779

Purkhi	93,500
115 Others	5,406
116 TRIPURI	
Kokbarak	9,17,900
Reang	58,539
Tripuri	33,138
116 Others	1,717
118 VAIPHEI	
Vaiphei	42,748
119 WANCHO	59,154
Wancho	59,154
120 YIMCHUNGRE	83,259
Chirr	12,300

Tikhir	11,071
Yimchungre	56,538
120 Others	3,350
121 ZELIANG	
Zeliang	63,529
122 ZEMI	50,925
Zemi	50,923
122 Others	2
123 ZOU	26,545
Zou	26,545
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>90,13,374</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,22,57,382</b>

Two scheduled languages namely Bodo and Manipuri form nearly one fourth of the Tibeto-Burman family.



*Scheduled and non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages*

Both the scheduled languages from the Tibeto-Burman family have more than ten lakhs of speakers. Manipuri (17,61,079) has the highest number of speakers among the family, followed by Bodo (14,82,929).

Among non-scheduled languages Garo (11,45,323) and Tripuri (10,11,294) have got more than ten lakhs of speakers. Three languages namely Lushai/Mizo (8,30,846), Miri/Mishing (6,29,954) and Karbi/Mikir (5,28,503) have less than ten lakhs and more than five lakhs of speakers. Fourteen languages have less than five lakhs but more than one lakh of speakers they are, Nissi/Dafla (4,06,532), Ao (2,60,008), Adi (2,48,834), Konyak (2,44,477), Mao (2,40,205),

Bhotia (2,29,954), Thado (2,29,340), Tangkhul (1,87,276), Tibetan (1,82,685), Lotha (1,79,467), Angami (1,52,796), Rabha (1,39,986), Dimasa (1,37,184), Kabui (1,22,931). Fourteen languages have less than one lakh but more than fifty thousand speakers. They are Hmar (98,988), Chakru/Chokri (91,216), Kuki (83,968), Kinnauri (83,561), Yimchungre (83,259), Paite (79,507), Sangtam (76,000), Chang (66,852), Rengma (65,328), Zeliang (63,529), Khiemnungan (61,983), Wancho (59,154), Phom (54,416), Zemi (50,925). Remaining thirty one languages have less than fifty thousand but more than ten thousand speakers. Liangmei (49,811), Lepcha (47,331), Mishmi (44,100), Vaiphei (42,748), Lakher (42,429), Khezha (41,625), Limbu (40,835), Halam (38,915), Tangsa (38,624), Mogh (36,665), Koch (36,434), Lalung (33,921), Maram (32,460), Deori (32,376), Nocte (30,839), Pawi (28,639), Anal (27,217), Zou (26,545), Maring (25,814), Pochury (21,654), Tamang (20,154), Chakhesang (19,846), Gangte (16,542), Sherpa (16,012), Rai (15,644), Kom (15,108), Balti (13,774), Monpa (13,703), Lahauli (11,574), Sema (10,802).

The languages are listed below in a descending order, along with their percentage within the family and in the country.

Sl.No.	Language	Speaker	Indian %	Tibeto-Burman %
			1,20,89,79,435	1,22,57,382
1.	GARO	11,45,323	0.094%	9.343%
2.	TRIPURI	10,11,294	0.083%	8.250%
3.	LUSHAI/MIZO	8,30,846	0.068%	6.778%
4.	MIRI/MISHING	6,29,954	0.052%	5.139%
5.	KARBI/MIKIR	5,28,503	0.043%	4.311%
6.	NISSI/DAFLA	4,06,532	0.033%	3.316%
7.	AO	2,60,008	0.021%	2.121%
8.	ADI	2,48,834	0.020%	2.030%
9.	KONYAK	2,44,477	0.020%	2.030%
10.	MAO	2,40,205	0.019%	1.959%
11.	BHOTIA	2,29,954	0.019%	1.876%
12.	THADO	2,29,340	0.018%	1.871%
13.	TANGKHUL	1,87,276	0.015%	1.527%
14.	TIBETAN	1,82,685	0.015%	1.490%
15.	LOTHA	1,79,467	0.014%	1.464%

16.	ANGAMI	1,52,796	0.012%	1.246%
17.	RABHA	1,39,986	0.011%	1.142%
18.	DIMASA	1,37,184	0.011%	1.119%
19.	KABUI	1,22,931	0.010%	1.002%
20.	HMAR	98,988	0.008%	0.807%
21.	CHAKRU/CHO KRI	91,216	0.007%	0.744%
22.	KUKI	83,968	0.006%	0.685%
23.	KINNAURI	83,561	0.006%	0.689%
24.	YIMCHUNGRE	83,259	0.006%	0.671%
25.	PAITE	79,507	0.006%	0.648%
26.	SANGTAM	76,000	0.006%	0.620%
27.	CHANG	66,852	0.005%	0.545%
28.	RENGMA	65,328	0.005%	0.545%
29.	ZELIANG	63,529	0.005%	0.518%
30.	KHIEMNUNGA N	61,983	0.005%	0.505%
31.	WANCHO	59,154	0.004%	0.482%
32.	PHOM	54,416	0.004%	0.443%
33.	ZEMI	50,925	0.004%	0.415%
34.	LIANGMEI	49,811	0.004%	0.406%
35.	LEPCHA	47,331	0.003%	0.386%
36.	MISHMI	44,100	0.003%	0.359%
37.	VAIPHEI	42,748	0.003%	0.348%
38.	LAKHER	42,429	0.003%	0.346%
39.	KHEZHA	41,625	0.003%	0.339%
40.	LIMBU	40,835	0.003%	0.33%

41.	HALAM	38,915	0.003%	0.317%
42.	TANGSA	38,624	0.003%	0.315%
43.	MOGH	36,665	0.003%	0.299%
44.	KOCH	36,434	0.003 %	0.297%
45.	LALUNG	33,921	0.002%	0.276%
46.	MARAM	32,460	0.002%	0.276%
47.	DEORI	32,376	0.002%	0.264%
48.	NOCTE	30,839	0.002%	0.251%
49.	PAWI	28,639	0.002%	0.233%
50.	ANAL	27,217	0.002%	0.222%
51.	ZOU	26,545	0.002%	0.216%
52.	MARING	25,814	0.002%	0.210%
53.	POCHURY	21,654	0.001%	0.176%
54.	TAMANG	20,154	0.001%	0.164%
55.	CHAKHESANG	19,846	0.001%	0.161%
56.	GANGTE	16,542	0.001%	0.134%
57.	SHERPA	16,012	0.001%	0.130%
58.	RAI	15,644	0.001%	0.127%
59.	KOM	15,108	0.001%	0.123%
60.	LADAKHI	14,952	0.001%	0.121%
61.	BALTI	13,774	0.001%	0.112%
62.	MONPA	13,703	0.001%	0.111%
63.	LAHAULI	11,574	9.573%	0.094%
64.	SEMA	10,802	8.934%	0.088%

*Graph from EXCEL file*

#### 4. Statistical data of the non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages

Statistical data of the non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages are given in different tables to show a comparative view with the scheduled languages of the family and with the non-scheduled languages of the country, and their strength of speakers.

A comparison of Tibeto-Burman scheduled and Non-scheduled languages is provided in table 4.1.

##### 4.1 Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Tibeto-Burman Languages

Description	Number of Speakers	% of Tibeto-Burman	% Of India
Tibeto-Burman Languages	1,22,57,382	100%	1.012%
Non-Scheduled Tibeto-Burman Languages	90,13,374	73.53%	0.74%
Scheduled Tibeto-Burman Languages	32,44,008	26.46%	0.026%

##### 4.1 A comparison of Tibeto-Burman scheduled and Non-scheduled languages

Tibeto-Burman has 1,22,57,382 speakers in the country, which forms 1.012% of the Indian population, in which 32,44,008 speakers are recorded under two of the scheduled languages and remaining 90,13,374 speakers are of non-scheduled languages. The percentage of scheduled languages is 26.46% and of non-scheduled languages is 73.53%.

The table below (4.2) shows the comparison of scheduled Indian languages and scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages.

##### 4.2 Scheduled Languages of India and Tibeto-Burman

Description	Number of Speakers	% of Scheduled Languages of India	% Of India
Indian Scheduled Languages	1,17,11,03,853	100%	96.717%
Scheduled Tibeto-Burman Languages	32,44,008	0.277%	0.026%

##### 4.2 Scheduled Languages of India and Tibeto-Burman

Total population of Indian scheduled languages' speakers is 1,17,11,03,853, this forms 96.717% of India. Tibeto-Burman forms 0.277% of the scheduled languages of India with the speakers of 32,44,008 and 0.026% of the Indian total population.

In the table below (4.3) non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages are compared with the non-scheduled languages of India.



#### 4.3 Non-Scheduled Languages of India and Tibeto-Burman

Description	Number of Speakers	% of Non-Scheduled Languages of India	% Of India
Indian Non-Scheduled Languages	3,97,51,124	100%	3.282%
Non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman Languages	90,13,374	22.674%	0.74%

#### 4.3 Non-Scheduled Languages of India and Tibeto-Burman

Number of non-scheduled languages' speakers in India is 3,97,51,124, which forms 3.282% of the Indian total population. Non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages have 90,13,374 speakers and it forms 22.674% of speakers of Indian non-scheduled languages and 0.74% of total Indian population.

### 5. Tibeto-Burman Mother Tongues

There are 143 mother tongues listed under various languages of the Tibeto-Burman family. Scheduled languages have six mother tongues, four under Bodo and two under Manipuri. Among them, three of the mother tongues are named under Bodo and one under Manipuri, and three under Bodo and one under Manipuri are unnamed. Remaining 137 mother tongues are listed under non-scheduled languages. Angami has more mother tongues, that is 13, however, one of them namely Angami is named and other are put under the group Other. Adi has the second highest mother tongue in the family of seven, out of which four are named and three others are not named. Six languages namely Ao, Yimchungr, Tripuri, Nissi/Dafla, Tangsa and Mishmi have four each mother tongues, and six other languages namely Bhotia, Tibetan, Mao, Kabui, Halam and Garo have three mother tongues. Twenty four languages have two mother tongues and the remaining twenty seven languages have one mother tongue each.

**6. Distribution of Non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages:** Non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages are recorded in most states in the country, however, their distribution is unequal. Most of the Tibeto-Burman speakers are located in the North-Eastern states, which further stretches to other states bordering China. Further, lesser spread is noticed in adjacent states and Karnataka that is located in far distance to the Tibeto-Burman region. The spread of all the languages are shown in the tables below.

Five states have more than ten lakhs of speakers, they are Assam (17,44,277), Nagaland (14,99,425), Manipur (11,57,812), Tripura (10,34,962) and Meghalaya (10,25,843). And two other states Mizoram (9,71,981) and Arunachal Pradesh (9,17,216) are also have nearly ten lakhs of Tibeto-Burman speakers. Three other states Jammu and Kashmir (2,29,721), Sikkim (1,55,047) and Himachal Pradesh (1,20,639) have got less than five lakhs and more than one lakh speakers. There are totally ten states with more than one lakhs of Tibeto-Burman speakers. Three states have less than one lakh and more than ten thousand speakers, they are West Bengal (47,008), Uttarakhand (36,432) and Karnataka (32,097). Odisha (9,526) state also has got nearly ten thousand speakers. Twelve states other than Odisha have less than ten thousand and more than one thousand non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman speakers, they are Nct Of Delhi (6,222), Maharashtra (3,903), Haryana (3,207), Rajasthan (3,040), Punjab (2,250), Uttar Pradesh (2,038),

Gujarat (1,841), Madhya Pradesh (1,664), Andhra Pradesh (1,618), Chhattisgarh (1,215), Jharkhand (1,072) and Bihar (1,022). And nine other states have less than one thousand speakers.

Seven states of North-East India forms 94.491% of the total Tibeto-Burman speakers of the country. Scheduled languages share 25.853% and non-scheduled languages share 68.138% of them. Distribution of these languages in the North-East states are shown in the table below.

	Sched uled TB Langu ages	% of the respec tive state	% of Sched uled TB languag es	Non- Schedul ed TB languag es	% of the respec tive state	% of nonsch eduled TB langua ges	Total	% of the respec tive state	% of TB langu age
Assam	15,84, 258	5.076 %	48.836 %	17,44,2 77	5.589 %	19.352 %	33,28, 535	10.66 6%	27.15 5%
Nagalan d	16,88 3	0.853 %	0.1377 %	14,99,4 25	75.785 %	16.635 %	15,16, 308	76.63 9%	12.37 0%
Manipur	15,22, 306	53.30 5%	46.926 %	11,57,8 12	40.542 %	12.845 %	26,80, 118	93.84 8%	21.86 5%
Tripura	24,29 0	0.661 %	0.748%	10,34,9 62	28.170 %	11.482 %	10,59, 252	28.83 1%	8.641 %
Meghala ya	9,330	0.314 %	0.274%	10,25,8 43	34.576 %	11.381 %	10,35, 173	34.89 0%	8.445 %
Mizora m	2,445	0.222 %	0.075%	9,71,98 1	88.586 %	10.783 %	9,74,4 26	88.80 9%	7.949 %
Arunach al Pradesh	9,930	0.717 %	0.306%	9,17,21 6	66.285 %	10.176 %	9,27,1 46	67.00 3%	7.563 %

*TABLE from EXCEL file*

It is noticeable from the above table that most of the scheduled languages' speakers are located from two states, Assam and Manipur where 48.836% and 46.926% found respectively. Around 95% of them are situated in these two states.

Manipur state has the maximum number of speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages in the state, that is 93.848%, with 40.542% of non-scheduled languages and 53.305% of scheduled languages. Mizoram has 88.809% of Tibeto-Burman speakers. Among them, 88.586% speakers are of non-scheduled languages and only 0.222% are of scheduled languages. 76.639% of the Nagaland population speaks Tibeto-Burman languages, in which 75.785% is of non-scheduled languages and only 0.853% is of scheduled languages. Arunachal Pradesh has 71.424% of Tibeto-Burman speakers in which 66.285% speaks non-scheduled languages and only 0.717%

speaks scheduled languages. Meghalaya state has 34.890% of Tibeto-Burman speakers in the state. Among them 34.576% speaks non-scheduled and only 0.300% speaks scheduled languages. Tripura has 28.831% of speakers in the state, in which 28.170% and 0.661% speakers are of non-scheduled and scheduled languages respectively. Assam is a state with less percentage of Tibeto-Burman speakers among the North-Eastern states with the population of 10.666% speaking Tibeto-Burman languages. 5.589% among them are non-scheduled languages' speakers and the rest that is 5.076% speaks scheduled languages.

Below table gives a complete picture of spread of Tibeto-Burman languages in all the seven states.

	India	Arunachal Pradesh	Assam	Manipur	Meghalaya	Mizoram	Nagaland	Tripura
23 ADI	2,48,834	2,40,026	3,705	78	390	26	95	17
25 ANAL	27,217	12	35	26,508	219	04	184	02
26 ANGAMI	1,52,796	44	87	76	89	10	1,51,883	03
27 AO	2,60,008	1,891	4,092	2,529	423	39	2,31,084	19,316
29 BALTI	13,774	02	04	00	00	00	00	00
31 BHOTIA	2,29,954	62,458	128	11	207	01	136	03
34 CHAKHESANG	19,846	02	709	1,146	25	06	17,919	00
35 CHAKRU/CHOKRI	91,216	03	34	02	17	05	91,010	29
36 CHANG	66,852	762	125	05	10	01	65,632	00
38 DEORI	32,376	4,844	27,441	02	26	03	05	02
39 DIMASA	1,37,184	215	1,31,474	36	284	36	4,871	16
42 GANGTE	16,542	04	54	15,274	281	705	10	18
43 GARO	11,45,323	6,597	1,72,520	65	9,36,496	94	2,351	21,019
46 HALAM	38,915	04	36	375	8,679	23,089	16	108
47 HMAR	98,988	14	29,323	49,081	1,994	17,981	61	171
51 KABUI	1,22,931	44	5,616	1,09,616	208	15	6,968	10
52 KARBI/MIKIR	5,28,503	1,536	5,11,732	107	14,380	08	584	12
56 KHEZHA	41,625	07	07	6,977	17	00	34,218	05
57 KHIEMNUNGA N	61,983	09	30	02	02	00	61,906	02

59 KINNAURI	83,561	06	02	01	00	01	05	01
61 KOCH	36,434	11	12,550	02	23,199	03	08	67
64 KOM	15,108	02	10	14,621	79	01	49	01
66 KONYAK	2,44,477	08	157	36	27	07	2,44,135	02
71 KUKI	83,968	121	22,327	37,805	1,367	295	18,392	1,693
73 LADAKHI	14,952	17	19	03	00	04	00	01
74 LAHAULI	11,574	12	07	00	00	01	00	00
76 LAKHER	42,429	10	41	04	91	41,876	12	08
77 LALUNG	33,921	10	31,821	00	2,057	00	24	04
78 LEPCHA	47,331	10	10	16	17	03	45	01
79 LIANGMEI	49,811	01	95	45,546	39	01	3,923	11
80 LIMBU	40,835	120	780	169	15	01	32	02
81 LOTHIA	1,79,467	54	1,188	69	228	09	1,77,488	04
82 LUSHAI/MIZO	8,30,846	1,431	4,006	6,500	4,455	8,02,763	1,194	5,639
84 MAO	2,40,205	89	153	2,24,361	225	13	14,490	11
85 MARAM	32,460	49	21	32,098	00	02	240	00
86 MARING	25,814	01	00	25,657	02	02	96	01
87 MIRI/MISHING	6,29,954	10,402	6,19,197	10	131	18	86	06
88 MISHMI	44,100	42,017	1,578	11	30	04	33	14
89 MOGH	36,665	55	325	07	04	330	09	35,722
90 MONPA	13,703	12,398	56	27	90	04	11	01
94 NISSI/DAFLA	4,06,532	3,95,745	1,403	21	318	22	111	14
95 NOCTE	30,839	30,308	279	44	74	04	75	03
96 PAITE	79,507	60	299	55,031	770	22,214	150	30
98 PAWI	28,639	00	01	00	04	28,624	09	00
100 PHOM	54,416	649	24	16	13	00	53,674	00
101 POCHURY	21,654	00	32	69	00	00	21,446	01
102 RABHA	1,39,986	89	1,01,752	18	21,671	08	131	43
103 RAI	15,644	3,897	1,110	146	07	23	17	00
104 RENGMA	65,328	30	3,149	03	49	07	61,537	00
105 SANGTAM	76,000	03	82	10	26	01	75,841	02
107 SEMA	10,802	93	1,945	104	66	05	8,268	03
108 SHERPA	16,012	211	124	26	00	00	13	00
111 TAMANG	20,154	1,057	2,063	537	30	17	135	00
112 TANGKHUL	1,87,276	50	148	1,83,091	951	20	2,018	27
113 TANGSA	38,624	36,546	1,723	49	37	05	151	04



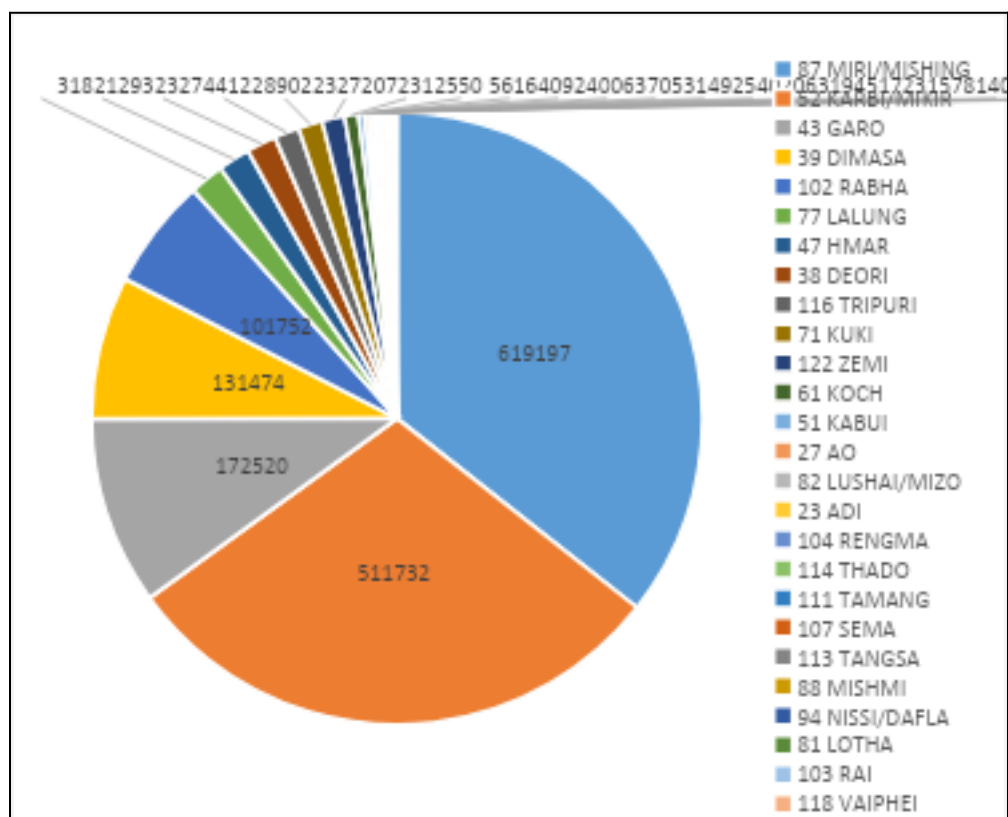
The above map shows that Tibeto-Burman languages have thickly situated in the states of the North-East part of India, and in Sikkim which is another state from the north-east part of India, and in northern most states such as Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, which are sharing border with the China. Further Uttarakhand another state bordering with China, West Bengal a nearest state and a far located state Karnataka are seen in the Indian Tibeto-Burman map.

State wise distribution of non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages in these seven states are shown below in different tables. Languages with more than one thousand speakers in each state are listed in the table.

### Assam

	India	Assam	% of the language	% of the state
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	17,44,277	19.352%	5.589%
87 MIRI/MISHING	6,29,954	6,19,197	98.292%	1.984%
52 KARBI/MIKIR	5,28,503	5,11,732	96.826%	1.639%
43 GARO	11,45,323	1,72,520	15.062%	0.552%
39 DIMASA	1,37,184	1,31,474	95.837%	0.421%
102 RABHA	1,39,986	1,01,752	72.687%	0.326%
77 LALUNG	33,921	31,821	93.809%	0.101%
47 HMAR	98,988	29,323	29.622%	0.093%
38 DEORI	32,376	27,441	84.757%	0.087%
116 TRIPURI	10,11,294	22,890	2.263%	0.073%
71 KUKI	83,968	22,327	26.589%	0.071%
122 ZEMI	50,925	20,723	40.693%	0.066%
61 KOCH	36,434	12,550	34.445%	0.040%
51 KABUI	1,22,931	5,616	4.568%	0.017%
27 AO	2,60,008	4,092	1.573%	0.013%
82 LUSHAI/MIZO	8,30,846	4,006	0.482%	0.012%
23 ADI	2,48,834	3,705	1.488%	0.011%
104 RENGMA	65,328	3,149	4.820%	0.010%
114 THADO	2,29,340	2,540	1.107%	0.008%

111 TAMANG	20,154	2,063	10.236%	0.006%
107 SEMA	10,802	1,945	18.005%	0.006%
113 TANGSA	38,624	1,723	4.460%	0.005%
88 MISHMI	44,100	1,578	3.578%	0.005%
94 NISSI/DAFLA	4,06,532	1,403	0.345%	0.004%
81 LOTH	1,79,467	1,188	0.661%	0.003%
103 RAI	15,644	1,110	7.095%	0.003%
118 VAIPHEI	42,748	1,094	2.559%	0.003%



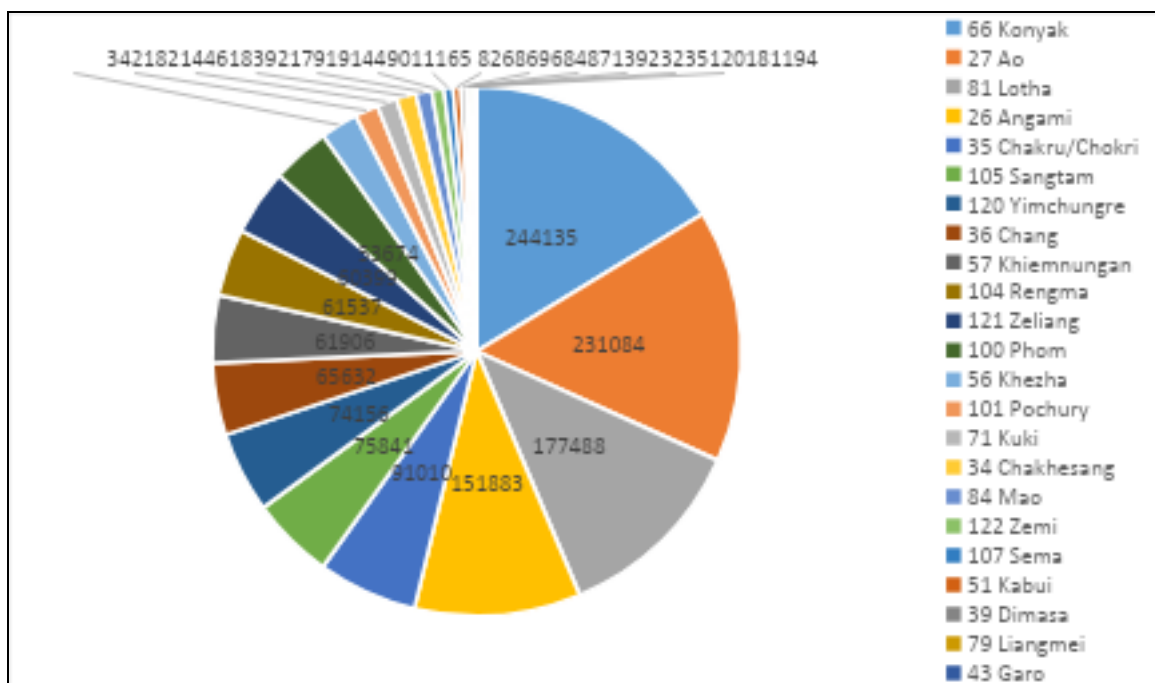
Assam state, which has recorded sixty three languages of the family, is a biggest state for non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages. Two languages have more than five lakhs of speakers, Miri/Mishing (6,19,197) and Karbi/Mikir (5,11,732) in the state. There are three languages with less than five lakhs but more than one lakhs, Garo (1,72,520), Dimasa (1,31,474) and Rabha (1,01,752). Seven languages namely Lalung (31,821), Hmar (29,323), Deori (27,441), Tripuri (22,890), Kuki (22,327), Zemi (20,723) and Koch (12,550) have less than one lakh but more than ten thousand speakers. Fourteen other languages have less than ten thousand but more than one thousand speakers. And the other thirty eight languages have less than one thousand speakers.

Assam has 19.352% of total non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman speakers of the country. Four languages have more than 90% of the speakers in the state, they are Miri/Mishing - 98.292%, Karbi/Mikir - 96.826%, Dimasa - 95.837% and Lalung - 93.809%. Deori has 84.757% and Rabha has 72.687% speakers of the respective languages in the state. Zemi has 40.693% of the speakers in Assam, three other languages namely Koch (34.445%), Hmar (29.622%) and Kuki (26.589%) have more than 25% of the speakers in the state

## Nagaland

	India	Nagaland	% of the language	% of the state
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	14,99,425	16.635%	75.785%
66 Konyak	2,44,477	2,44,135	99.860%	12.339%
27 Ao	2,60,008	2,31,084	88.875%	11.679%
81 Lotha	1,79,467	1,77,488	98.897%	8.970%
26 Angami	1,52,796	1,51,883	99.402%	7.676%
35 Chakru/Chokri	91,216	91,010	99.774%	4.599%
105 Sangtam	76,000	75,841	99.790%	3.833%
120 Yimchungre	83,259	74,156	89.066%	3.748%
36 Chang	66,852	65,632	98.175%	3.317%
57 Khiemnungan	61,983	61,906	99.875%	3.128%
104 Rengma	65,328	61,537	94.196%	3.110%
121 Zeliang	63,529	60,399	95.073%	3.052%
100 Phom	54,416	53,674	98.636%	2.712%
56 Khezha	41,625	34,218	82.205%	1.729%
101 Pochury	21,654	21,446	99.039%	1.083%
71 Kuki	83,968	18,392	21.903%	0.929%
34 Chakhesang	19,846	17,919	90.290%	0.905%
84 Mao	2,40,205	14,490	6.032%	0.732%
122 Zemi	50,925	11,165	21.924%	0.564%
107 Sema	10,802	8,268	76.541%	0.417%
51 Kabui	1,22,931	6,968	5.668%	0.352%
39 Dimasa	1,37,184	4,871	3.550%	0.246%
79 Liangmei	49,811	3,923	7.875%	0.198%
43 Garo	11,45,323	2,351	0.205%	0.118%
112 Tangkhul	1,87,276	2,018	1.077%	0.101%
82 Lushai/Mizo	8,30,846	1,194	0.143%	0.060%





Nagaland has 14,99,425 speakers of Tibeto-Burman non-scheduled languages from sixty one languages, which forms 16.635% of the state. There are two languages, Konyak (2,44,135) and Ao (2,31,084), which have got more than two lakhs of speakers in the state. There are two other languages namely Lotha (1,77,488) and Angami (1,51,883) which have less than two lakhs but more than one lakh speakers in the state. Chakru/Chokri (91,216) has close to one lakh speakers. There are seven other languages namely Sangtam (75,841), Yimchungre (74,156), Chang (65,632), Khiemnungan (61,906), Rengma (61,537), Zeliang (60,399) and Phom (53,674) with less than one lakh and more than fifty thousand speakers for each language. Six other languages have less than fifty thousand and more than ten thousand speakers Khezha (34,218), Pochury (21,446), Kuki (18,392), Chakhesang (17,919), Mao (14,490) and Zemi (11,165). And seven other languages have less than ten thousand and more than one thousand speakers. Thirty six languages have less than a thousand speakers.

It is very interesting that ten languages that are recorded in the state have more than 95% of the respective language speakers in the state, and six among them have nearly 100% speakers in the state. Khiemnungan has 99.875%, Konyak has 99.860%, Sangtam has 99.790%, Chakru/Chokri has 99.774%, Angami has 99.402%, Pochury has 99.039%, Lotha has 98.897%, Phom has 98.636%, Chang has 98.175% and Zeliang has 95.073% recorded in the state. Two other languages namely Rengma (94.196%) and Chakhesang (90.290%) have less than 95% and more than 90%, and four other languages have less than 90% and more than 75% speakers in the state.

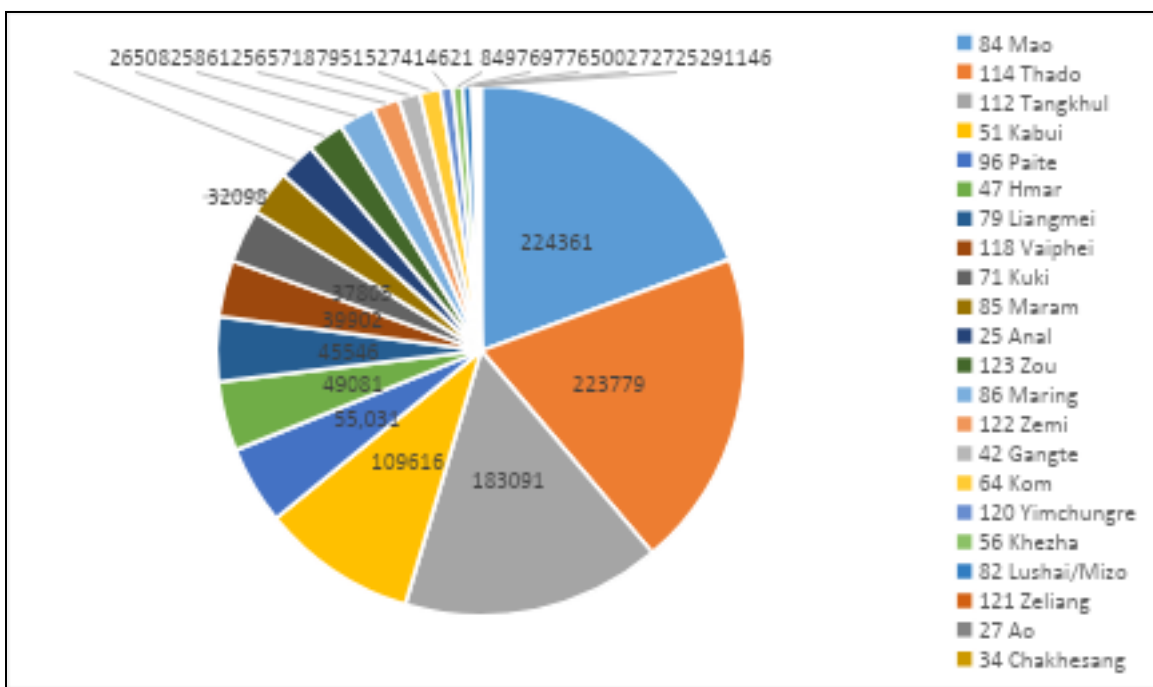
**Manipur**

	<b>India</b>	<b>Manipur</b>	<b>% of the language</b>	<b>% of the state</b>
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	1157812	12.845%	40.542%
84 Mao	240205	2,24,361	93.403%	7.856%
114 Thado	2,29,340	2,23,779	97.575%	7.835%
112 Tangkhul	187276	1,83,091	97.765%	6.411%
51 Kabui	1,22,931	1,09,616	89.168%	3.838%
96 Paite	79,507	55,031	69.215%	1.926%
47 Hmar	98,988	49,081	49.582%	1.718%
79 Liangmei	49,811	45,546	91.437%	1.594%
118 Vaiphei	42,748	39,902	93.342%	1.397%
71 Kuki	83,968	37,805	45.023%	1.323%
85 Maram	32,460	32,098	98.884%	1.123%
25 Anal	27,217	26,508	97.395%	3.501%
123 Zou	26,545	25,861	97.423%	0.905%
86 Maring	25,814	25,657	99.391%	0.898%
122 Zemi	50,925	18,795	36.907%	0.658%
42 Gangte	16,542	15,274	92.334%	0.534%
64 Kom	15,108	14,621	96.776%	0.511%
120 Yimchungre	83,259	8,497	10.205%	0.297%
56 Khezha	41,625	6,977	16.761%	0.244%
82 Lushai/Mizo	8,30,846	6,500	0.782%	0.227%
121 Zeliang	63,529	2,727	4.292%	0.095%
27 Ao	2,60,008	2,529	0.972%	0.088%
34 Chakhesang	19,846	1,146	5.774%	0.040%

Manipur state has recorded 11,57,812 persons speaking sixty languages, which forms 12.845% of the total non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages of the country. Mao and Thado have more than two lakhs of speakers of respective languages. Mao has 2,24,361 and Thado has 2,23,779 speakers. Two other languages namely Tangkhul (1,83,091) and Kabui (1,09,616) have less than two lakhs and more than one lakh speakers in the state. Paite (55,031) has less than one lakh but more than fifty thousand speakers. Eleven languages have less than fifty thousand but more than ten thousand speakers, they are Paite (55,031), Hmar (49,081), Liangmei (45,546), Vaiphei (39,902), Kuki (37,805), Maram (32,098), Anal (26,508), Zou (25,861), Maring (25,657), Zemi (18,795), Gangte (15,274) and Kom (14,621). And six other languages have less than ten

thousand and more than one thousand speakers in the state. Remaining forty four languages have less than one thousand speakers.

Seven languages in the state have got more than 95% of the speakers in the state. Maring (99.391%), Maram (98.884%), Tangkhul (97.765%), Thado (97.575%), Zou (97.423%), Anal (97.395%) and Kom (96.776%) are the languages which have most of their speakers in Manipur. There are four other languages namely Mao (93.403%), Vaiphei (93.342%), Gangte (92.334%) and Liangmei (91.437%), with less than 95% and more than 90% of the respective language speakers in the state. Kabui (89.168%) has less than 90% but more than 75% and Paite (69.215%) has more than 50% of the speakers.

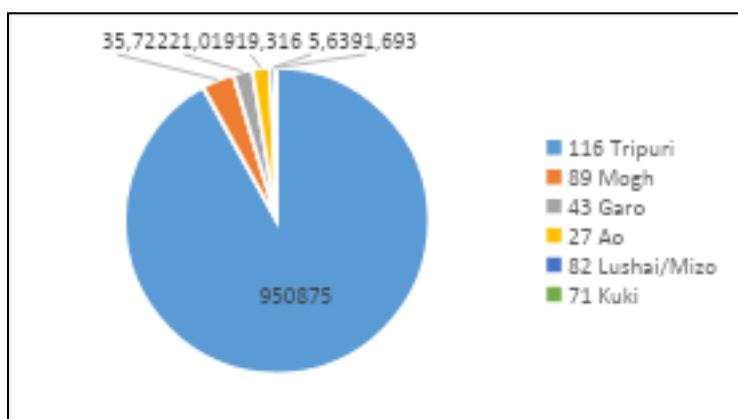


## Tripura

	India	Tripura	% of the language	% of the state
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	10,34,962	1.318%	28.170%
116 Tripuri	10,11,294	9,50,875	94.025%	25.881%
89 Mogh	36,665	35,722	97.428%	0.972%
43 Garo	11,45,323	21,019	1.835%	0.572%

27 Ao	2,60,008	19,316	7.429%	0.525%
82 Lushai/Mizo	8,30,846	5,639	0.678%	0.153%
71 Kuki	83,968	1,693	2.016%	0.046%

Tripura has recorded fifty two non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages in the state, which forms 1.318% of the Tibeto-Burman languages. Six among them have more than thousand speakers. Tripuri is a major language of the state with nearly ten lakhs of speakers. Three languages namely Mogh (35,722), Garo (21,019) and Ao (19,316) have less than one lakh and more than ten thousand speakers, two other languages have recorded less than ten thousand and more than one thousand speakers and forty six languages have got less than one thousand speakers. Mogh has 97.428% and Tripuri has 94.025% of the speakers of the respective languages in the state.

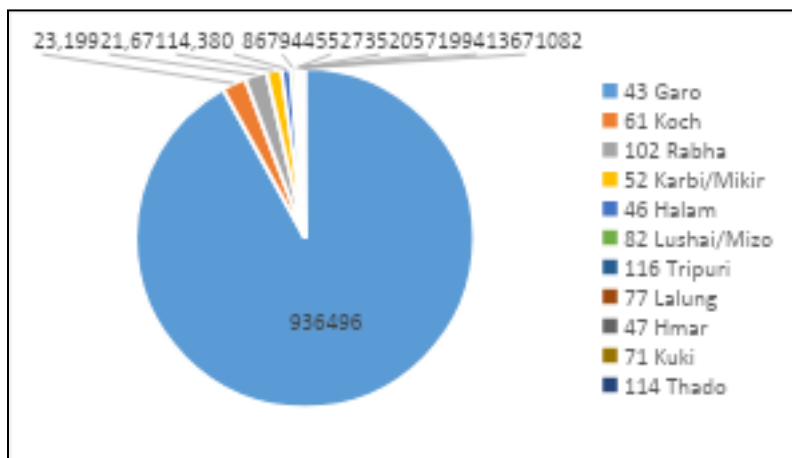


## Meghalaya

	India	Meghalaya	% of the language	% of the state
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	10,25,843	11.381%	34.576%
43 Garo	11,45,323	9,36,496	81.766%	31.564%
61 Koch	36,434	23,199	63.674%	0.781%
102 Rabha	1,39,986	21,671	15.480%	0.730%
52 Karbi/Mikir	5,28,503	14,380	2.720%	0.484%
46 Halam	38,915	8,679	22.302%	0.292%
82 Lushai/Mizo	8,30,846	4,455	0.536%	0.150%

116 Tripuri	10,11,294	2,735	0.270%	0.092%
77 Lalung	33,921	2,057	6.064%	0.069%
47 Hmar	98,988	1,994	2.014%	0.067%
71 Kuki	83,968	1,367	1.628%	0.046%
114 Thado	2,29,340	1,082	0.471%	0.036%

Fifty seven non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages are recorded in the state of Meghalaya, it forms 11.381% of the Non-Scheduled languages. Eleven languages among them have got more than thousand speakers. Garo is a major language with nearly ten lakhs (9,36,496) speakers. Three other languages namely Koch (23,199), Rabha (21,671) and Karbi/Mikir (14,380) have less than one lakh and more than ten thousand speakers and other seven languages have got less than ten thousand speakers in the state. Other forty six languages have got less than one thousand speakers in the state. Garo language has 81.766% of the language, and Koch has 63.674% of the language.

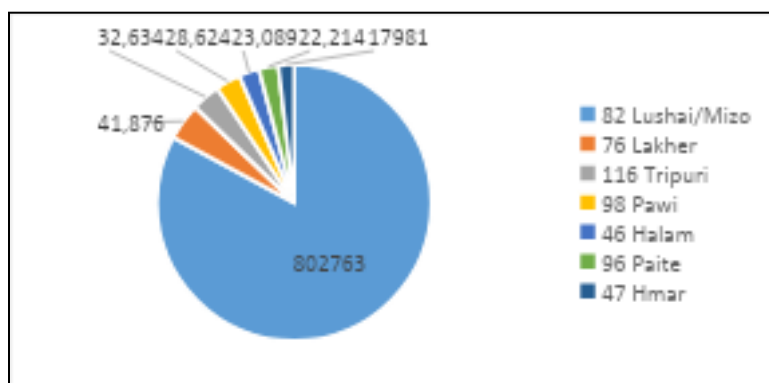


## Mizoram

	India	Mizoram	% of the language	% of the state
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	9,71,981	10.783%	88.586%
82 Lushai/Mizo	8,30,846	8,02,763	96.619%	73.164%
76 Lakher	42,429	41,876	98.696%	3.816%
116 Tripuri	10,11,294	32,634	3.226%	2.974%
98 Pawi	28,639	28,624	99.947%	2.608%
46 Halam	38,915	23,089	59.331%	2.104%

96 Paite	79,507	22,214	27.939%	2.024%
47 Hmar	98,988	17,981	18.164%	1.638%

There are fifty eight languages recorded in the state of Mizoram, which forms 10.783% of the non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman speakers of the country. Among these languages, only seven have more than a thousand speakers. Lushai/Mizo (8,02,763) is the only language with more than lakh speakers in the state. Five other languages, Lakher (41,876), Tripuri (32,634), Pawi (28,624), Halam (23,089) and Paite (22,214) have less than one lakh and more than ten thousand speakers and one language namely Hmar has less than ten thousand and more than one thousand speakers. Remaining fifty one languages have recorded less than one thousand speakers. Pawi has got most of the speakers that is 99.947% in the state. Further, Lakher has got 98.696% and Lushai/Mizo has got 96.619% speakers of the respective languages in the state. Halam is another language with 59.331% speakers of the language recorded in the state.



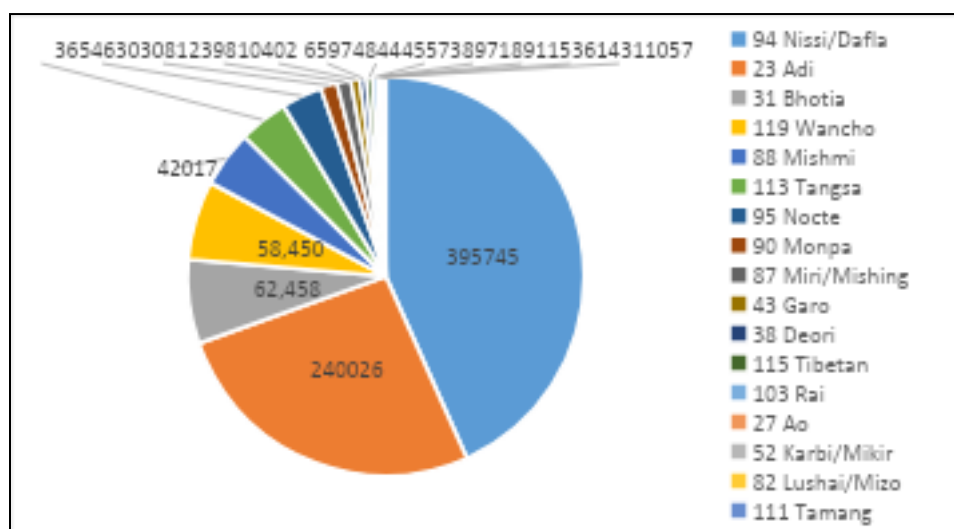
### Arunachal Pradesh

	India	Arunachal Pradesh	% of the language	% of the state
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	9,17,216	10.176%	66.285%
94 Nissi/Dafla	406,532	3,95,745	97.346%	28.599%
23 Adi	2,48,834	2,40,026	96.460%	17.346%
31 Bhotia	2,29,954	62,458	27.161%	4.513%
119 Wancho	59,154	58,450	98.809%	4.224%
88 Mishmi	44,100	42,017	95.276%	3.036%
113 Tangsa	38,624	36,546	94.619%	2.641%
95 Nocte	30,839	30,308	98.278%	2.190%
90 Monpa	13,703	12,398	90.476%	0.895%
87 Miri/Mishing	6,29,954	10,402	1.651%	0.751%

43 Garo	11,45,323	6,597	0.575%	0.476%
38 Deori	32,376	4,844	14.961%	0.350%
115 Tibetan	1,82,685	4,557	2.494%	0.329%
103 Rai	15,644	3,897	24.910%	0.281%
27 Ao	2,60,008	1,891	0.727%	0.136%
52 Karbi/Mikir	5,28,503	1,536	0.290%	0.111%
82 Lushai/Mizo	8,30,846	1,431	0.172%	0.103%
111 Tamang	20,154	1,057	5.244%	0.076%

Arunachal Pradesh state has recorded sixty two languages in the state, which forms 10.176% of the non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages of the country. Nissi/Dafla (3,95,745) and Adi (2,40,026) has more than two lakhs of speakers and Bhotia (62,458) and Wancho (58,450) have less than one lakh and more than fifty thousand speakers in the state. Five other languages have less than fifty thousand and more than ten thousand speakers, Mishmi (42,017), Tangsa (36,546), Nocte (30,308), Monpa (12,398) and Miri/Mishing (10,402) and eight languages have got less than ten thousand speakers and more than one thousand speakers. Remaining forty five languages have less than a thousand speakers.

Wancho (98.809%) and Nokte (98.278%) have got more than 98% of the speakers of the respective languages and Nissi/Dafla has got 97.346%, Adi has 96.460% and Mishmi got 95.276% of the speakers of the respective languages in the state. Two other languages namely Tangsa (94.619%) and Monpa (90.476%) have less than 95% and more than 90% of the speakers.



There are three other states outside the region of North-East part of India with more than one lakh speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages. They are Jammu and Kashmir (2,32,599), Sikkim (1,55,495) and Himachal Pradesh (1,20,977).

### **Jammu and Kashmir**

Jammu and Kashmir has 2,32,599 of speakers in which 2,29,721 are non-scheduled languages' speakers and other 2,878 speak scheduled languages. Two languages namely Bhotia (1,07,451) and Tibetan (1,00,499) have got more than one lakh speakers in the state. One language Balti (12,399) has got less than one lakh and more than ten thousand and Ladakhi (7,638) has got less than ten thousand and more than one thousand speakers, all other languages have got less than one thousand speakers. Jammu and Kashmir state has got recorded fifty five non-scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages with the 2.548%. Balti has its more than 90% of the speakers located in Jammu and Kashmir state, further Tibetan and Ladakhi have their more than 50% of the speakers in the state and another language that is Bhotia has nearly half of the speakers in the state.

	<b>India</b>	<b>Jammu and Kashmir</b>	<b>% of the language</b>	<b>% of the state</b>
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	2,29,721	2.548%	1.831%
Bhotia	2,29,954	1,07,451	46.727%	0.856%
Tibetan	1,82,685	1,00,499	55.012%	0.801%
Balti	13,774	12,399	90.017%	0.098%
Ladakhi	14,952	7,638	51.083%	0.060%

### **Sikkim**

Sikkim has recorded 1,55,495 speakers for the Tibeto-Burman speakers in which 1,55,047 are non-scheduled languages' speakers. Forty languages recorded, which forms 1.720%. There are five languages with more than ten thousand speakers, Bhotia (41,889), Lepcha (38,733), Limbu (38,313), Sherpa (13,681), Tamang (11,734) and two other languages Rai (7,471) and Tibetan (2,785) have got less than ten thousand and more than one thousand speakers.

	<b>India</b>	<b>Sikkim</b>	<b>% of the language</b>	<b>% of the state</b>
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	1,55,047	1.720%	25.393%
Bhotia	2,29,954	41,889	18.216%	6.860%
Lepcha	47,331	38,733	81.834%	6.343%
Limbu	40,835	38,313	93.823%	6.274%
Sherpa	16,012	13,681	85.442%	2.240%
Tamang	20,154	11,734	58.221%	1.921%
Rai	15,644	7,471	47.756%	1.223%
Tibetan	1,82,685	2,785	1.524%	0.456%



## Himachal Pradesh

Most of the Tibeto-Burman speakers of the state of Himachal Pradesh that is 1,20,977 are speakers of non-scheduled languages, which is 1,20,639. There are forty four languages with 1.338% used in the state. Kinnauri (82,712) has got more speakers. Tibetan (21,322) and Lahauli (11,073) are two other languages with more than ten thousand speakers. Two languages Bhotia (2,012) and Ladhaki (1,196) have less than ten thousand and more than thousand speakers.

	India	Himachal Pradesh	% of the language	% of the state
Tibeto-Burman	90,13,374	1,20,639	1.338%	1.757%
Kinnauri	83,561	82,712	98.983%	1.204%
Tibetan	1,82,685	21,322	11.671%	0.310%
Lahauli	11,574	11,073	95.671%	0.161%
Bhotia	2,29,954	2,012	0.874%	0.029%
Ladakhi	14,952	1,196	7.998%	0.017%

## States with more than ten thousand speakers and less than one lakh

Four states have less than one lakh and more than ten thousand speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages: West Bengal (91,757), Uttarakhand (36,973), Karnataka (36,639) and Delhi (10,407).

West Bengal (91,757) has nearly one lakh speakers. 47,008 among these speak non-scheduled languages and the rest (44,749) speak scheduled languages. One of the non-scheduled languages namely Rabha (14,387) has got more than ten thousands of speakers and six other languages namely Lepcha (8,637), Tibetan (8,500), Bhotia (4,293), Tamang (3,821), Garo (1,729), Sherpa (1,311) have got less than ten thousands and more than one thousand of speakers.

Uttarakhand state has recorded 541 speakers for scheduled Tibeto-Burman languages and other 36,432 for non-scheduled languages. among these, Tibetan (10,162) has got more than ten thousands of speakers, and four languages Bhotia (9,287), Nissi/Dafla (7,553), Halam (6,001), Balti (1,173) have less than ten thousands and more than thousand speakers. Out of 36,639 speakers of Tibeto-Burman speakers from the state of Karnataka, 4,542 speak scheduled and other 32,097 speak non-scheduled languages. The Tibetan language has 27,544 speakers, which is the only language with more than ten thousands of speakers in the state. And, all other recorded languages have less than a thousand speakers. Delhi has 10,407 speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages. Among these, 4,185 speak scheduled languages and another 6,222 speak non-scheduled languages. Except Tibetan, which has 1,900 speakers, no other language has recorded thousand speakers.

## Spread of Tibeto-Burman languages

Twenty languages have more than one lakh speakers in a single state. It shows the spread of individual languages, which are located in a specific region. It should help us understand the development of these languages in the past, their settlements in different regions.

Languages with more than one lakhs of speakers in a particular state are listed below.

<b>Language</b>	<b>Speakers</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>% of the respective state</b>	<b>% of the non-scheduled TB</b>
Tripuri	9,50,875	Tripura	25.881%	10.549%
Garos	9,36,496	Meghalaya	31.564%	10.390%
Lushai/Mizo	8,02,763	Mizoram	73.164%	8.906%
Miri/Mishing	6,19,197	Assam	1.984%	6.869%
Karbi/Mikir	5,11,732	Assam	1.639%	5.677%
Nissi/Dafla	3,95,745	Arunachal Pradesh	28.599%	4.390%
Konyak	2,44,135	Nagaland	12.339%	2.708%
Adi	2,40,026	Arunachal Pradesh	17.346%	2.662%
Ao	2,31,084	Nagaland	11.679%	2.563%
Mao	2,24,361	Manipur	7.856%	2.489%
Thado	2,23,779	Manipur	7.835%	2.482%
Tangkhul	1,83,091	Manipur	6.411%	2.031%
Lotha	1,77,488	Nagaland	8.970%	1.969%
Garos	1,72,520	Assam	0.552%	1.914%
Angami	1,51,883	Nagaland	7.676%	1.685%
Dimas	1,31,474	Assam	0.421%	1.458%
Kabui	1,09,616	Manipur	3.838%	1.216%
Bhotia	1,07,451	Jammu and Kashmir	0.856%	1.192%
Rabha	1,01,752	Assam	0.326%	1.128%
Tibetan	1,00,499	Jammu and Kashmir	0.801%	1.114%

The above list shows that

- 1) Assam is a house for five Tibeto-Burman languages with more than one lakh speakers, Manipur and Nagaland states house four languages, Arunachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir states have two languages, and Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura have one language each
- 2) Garos is the only language which has got more than one lakh speakers in two states they are Meghalaya and Assam, and all other nineteen languages found only in one of the states

It may be noticed from the above list that there are forty one languages with more than 90% of their speakers recorded in a single state. Further nine other languages have their less than 90% but more than 75% of the speakers and seven languages less than 75% and more than 50% of the speakers in a single state. Out of sixty two recorded languages, fifty seven show more than half of their speakers located in a particular state. Sixteen languages are located in Nagaland (Khiemnungan-99.875%, Konyak-99.860%, Sangtam-99.790%, Chakru/Chokri-99.774%,

Angami-99.402%, Pochury-99.039%, Lotha-98.897%, Phom-98.636%, Chang-98.175%, Zeliang-95.073%, Rengma-94.196%, Chakhesang-90.290%, Yimchungre-89.066%, Ao-88.875%, Khezha-82.205% and Sema-76.541%) and thirteen languages in Manipur (Maring-99.391%, Maram-98.884%, Tangkhul-97.765%, Thado-97.575%, Zou-97.423%, Anal-97.395%, Kom-96.776%, Mao-93.403%, Vaiphei-93.342% Gangte-92.334% Liangmei-91.437%, Kabui-89.168% and Paite-69.215%), seven in Arunachal Pradesh (Wancho-98.809%, Nocte-98.278%, Nissi/Dafla-97.346%, Adi-96.460%, Mishmi-95.276%, Tangsa-94.619% and Monpa-90.476%), six in Assam (Miri/Mishing-98.292%, Karbi/Mikir-96.826%, Dimasa-95.837%, Lalung-93.809%, Deori-84.757% and Rabha-72.687%), four languages each from Mizoram (Pawi-99.947%, Lakher-98.696%, Lushai/Mizo-96.619% and Halam-59.331%) and Sikkim (Limbu-93.823%, Sherpa-85.442%, Lepcha-81.834% and Tamang-58.221%), three in Jammu and Kashmir (Balti-90.017%, Tibetan-55.012% and Ladakhi-51.083%) and two each in Meghalaya (Garo-81.766% and Koch-63.674%) and Tripura (Mogh-97.428% and Tripuri-94.025%).

Few languages such as Tibetan are found widely spread in different states in the country. Further, Bhotia, Hmar, Kuki show less spread into different states.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has shown that Tibeto-Burman languages have been spread thickly in the Indian states at the China border, mainly in the North Eastern states. An adjacent state West Bengal and another state which is far away from the Tibeto-Burman region that is Karnataka, have thousands of speakers. Karnataka is the only state located far from the Tibeto-Burman region of the country. Most of these languages are situated in a particular state, which is very important to understand the history and geographical spread of these languages and to be considered for the mother tongue education, bilingual-multilingual classrooms and such other policies and also for the social activities including media, entertainment etc.



## A Morphological Study of Pronouns in Yimkhiung

Payia Maheo<sup>1</sup> & Imlienla Imchen<sup>1</sup>

Nagaland University

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### ABSTRACT

Pronouns constitute an important nominal category and it plays a vital role as referent expressions in a language. The aim of this paper is to discuss the pronoun system of Yimkhiung, a lesser studied language of Tibeto-Burman spoken in North-East India, Nagaland. The analysis is based on morphological study by describing its formation, functions and also identifying the sub-classes of pronouns such as personal pronoun, demonstrative pronoun, possessive pronoun, reflexive pronoun and interrogative pronoun.

An interesting feature in personal pronoun is that Yimkhiung exhibit an innovative form from its Proto Tibeto Burman personal pronoun \*ŋa 'I' and \*naŋ 'You'. Additionally, the third person is distinguished for gender in singular form and also it shows a distinct form from the corresponding first and second person dual and plural form. The possessive pronouns also demonstrate double plural marking depending on the speaker (s) usage. Further, a demonstrative pronoun can reduplicate to emphasize the referent and thereby acts as emphatic demonstrative pronoun. The paper will thus provide morphologically the different types of pronouns found in Yimkhiung.

### 1. Introduction

The Yimkhiung (ISO 639-3: yim) earlier known by their misspelled term 'Yimchunger/Yimchünger' constitutes one of the Naga tribes of Nagaland. The word 'Yimkhiung' consists of 'yim' /jim/ meaning 'search' and 'khiung' /k<sup>hi</sup>uŋ/ meaning 'reached or found'. The people of Yimkhiung are known as 'Yimkhiungrü' /jim<sup>hi</sup>uŋr<sup>u</sup>/ where 'rü' /r<sup>u</sup>/ implies 'people'. Thus, 'Yimkhiungrü' means 'the one who has searched and reached' (Lakiumong, 2000: 11). The language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family. Grierson (1903) classified Yimkhiung under the Central group of the Naga languages as 'Yimchungrü'.

The Yimkhiungrü mainly inhabits Shamator and Pungro sub-division under Kiphire district of Nagaland. It is worth mentioning that Shamator was previously under Tuensang district of Nagaland however on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 it became an official district. According to 2011 census, the total population of Yimkhiung is 74,647<sup>2</sup>. Yimkhiung has five dialects namely: Chirr /t<sup>hi</sup>ɿ/, Makury /makui/, Longphur /lonp<sup>hi</sup>uɿ/, Phenunger /p<sup>he</sup>nuɿ/, and Langa /laŋa/. The data

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [payiamahomei@gmail.com](mailto:payiamahomei@gmail.com) , [aien.imchen@nagalanduniversity.ac.in](mailto:aien.imchen@nagalanduniversity.ac.in)

<sup>2</sup>[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yimkhiung\\_Naga](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yimkhiung_Naga).

presented in this paper is based on the Yimkhiung speakers of ‘Langa’<sup>3</sup> from Shamator district. Similar to other Naga languages, Yimkhiung does not have its own script.

Morphologically, the language of Yimkhiung is closely related with Ao and Sangtam. An intriguing aspect can be observed even in personal pronouns between Yimkhiung and Sangtam. Both the languages share identical forms in singular person and exhibit gender distinction in third person singular as shown in Table 1. The language has the same marker for first person plural that is /-sa/ and also the same form for third person plural that is /aɪə/. Additionally, both the language bears the same genitive marker except with the vowel height that is /jo/ (Yimkhiung) and /jɔ/ (Sangtam).

Singular Person in Yimkhiung		Singular Person in Sangtam (Imlienla, 2012: 107)
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	/i/	/iʔ/
2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	/nə/	/nəʔ/
3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	/api/ (common term) /apipuʔ/ (M) /apipe/ (F)	/abi/ (common term) /abu/ (M) /abəkiə/ (F)

*Table 1: Singular persons in Yimkhiung and Sangtam*

## 2. Methodology

The data for this study were collected from the native speakers of Yimkhiungrū during the researcher's fieldwork in Shamator district. The data were collected through interviews, narratives as well as elicited data. In addition, the data were also cross checked several times with different speakers. Secondary sources include books, articles and journals from related subjects.

## 3. Existing work on pronouns

To date, there hasn't been any descriptive study conducted on the Yimkhiung language. However, in "Morphology of Yimchunger" by Raguibou and Borah (2021), they provided a brief description of the pronoun system in Yimkhiung, detailing various types including personal, possessive, interrogative, reflexive, demonstrative, and indefinite pronouns.

The present study partly diverges from the analysis and findings of Ranguibou and Borah (ibid). In demonstrative pronouns, Raguibou and Borah (ibid) identified /zu/ as distal but the voiced alveolar fricative /z/ contradicts with the present findings. Additionally, in interrogative pronoun they analysed ‘what’ as /təma/ and ‘where’ as /kətsiŋ/ which also

<sup>3</sup> This dialect is considered as Standard variety in Yimkhiung.

contradicts with the present findings. Although they have described the different types of pronouns in their paper, it lacks detailed discussion.

The present paper therefore aims to provide detailed analysis on the types of pronoun such as personal pronoun, possessive pronoun, demonstrative pronoun, reflexive pronoun and interrogative pronoun.

#### 4. Pronouns

Pronouns are a closed grammatical category. By definition, pronouns are referring to expressions that can be thought of as abbreviated versions of determined noun phrases (Payne, 2011: 122). Crystal (2008: 393) defined pronoun as a term used in the grammatical classification of words, referring to the closed set of items which can be used to substitute for a noun phrase. Bhat (2004:1) definition of ‘pronoun’ constitutes the different types of pronoun. In his introductory section on “Pronouns” he defined the term ‘pronoun’ as a general used for referring to several different sets of words such as personal pronouns, demonstratives, interrogatives, indefinites, relative, correlatives, etc.

#### 5. Pronouns in Yimkhiung

Morpho-phonologically, pronouns in Yimkhiung are free forms like other Naga languages such as Lotha (Ngullie, 2020), Poula (Mere & Imlienla, 2023) and function “to fill the position of a noun phrase” (Payne, 1997: 43). They can also occupy “all the distributional properties of NP” (ibid, 1997). Semantically, they indicate persons, number, case and gender and syntactically, it can function as S, A, and O roles. The phenomenon of Pro-Drop or null anaphor is exhibited even in Yimkhiung especially in informal or casual speech discourse when the referent or the hearer knows that the expression is directed to them.

Various types of pronouns in Yimkhiung encompassing personal pronoun, possessive pronoun, demonstrative pronoun, reflexive pronoun, and interrogative pronoun- will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

#### 6. Personal pronouns

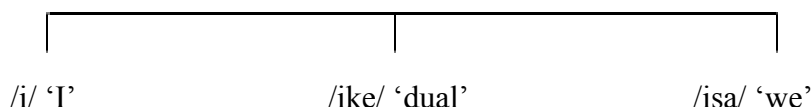
Lyons (1968: 276) mentioned “the category of person is clearly definable with reference to the notion of participant-roles” that is first person, second person and third person. On the basics of participant roles and number, Yimkhiung has a tripartite form of person and number as shown in Table 2. The tripartite person forms are: first person, second person and third person while the numbers are: singular, dual and plural. The personal pronouns of the singular form are free forms while personal pronouns of the dual and plural are formed through morphological suffixation along with the independent forms. Syntactically, there is no separate form for subject and object personal pronouns. In this sense, the occurrence of personal pronouns in subject and object position is expressed by the same forms. Additionally, there is no distinct lexeme for the inclusive-exclusive distinction like other Naga languages such as Tenyidie (Kuolie, 2006), Sangtam (Imchen, 2012), Mongsen (Coupe, 2007). Such distinction is inferred by the participant roles from the discourse context whether they are included or excluded.

Person	Singular	Dual	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup> Person	/i/	/ike/	/isa/

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Person</b>	/nə/	/nəke/	/nəsa/
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Person</b>	/api/ (common) /apiʔpe/ (female) /apiʔpuʔ/ (male)	/ape/	/aɪə/

*Table 2: Personal pronouns in Yimkhiung**6.1 First person*

According to Lyons (1968: 276) the first person is used by the speaker to refer to himself as a subject of discourse. In other words, the first person expresses itself to refer to the speaker or the addressee. In Yimkhiung, there are three first persons as shown in **figure 1**. In the given figure, /i/ refers to first person singular referent which is discrepant from the Proto Tibeto Burman \*ŋa provided by Benedict (1972: 93); ike/ meaning ‘both of us’ is express to refer to dual speech participants. The first person dual is inclusive of the speaker and the addressee. For expressing first person plural, /isa/ meaning ‘we/us’ is expressed. Syntactically, the first person singular ‘i’, dual ‘ike’ and plural ‘isa’ can occur in A, S and O arguments.

*Figure 1: First person*

Given examples (1)-(3) exemplify the syntactic position for first person in Yimkhiung wherein example (a) provides subject category while (b) provides object category of the first person singular.

1. a) i      jimk<sup>hiuŋ</sup>-ɪə      aʔ  
1SG   Yimkhiung-NMLZ      COP  
‘I belong to Yimkhiungrū (tribe)’  
  
b) tətəʃe    i    t<sup>h</sup>ɪənpuʔ    nə    i    kəjimkiʃe    mə-paʔ-juk  
but    1SG    God    AGT    1SG    never    NEG-IRR-forsake  
‘But my God will never forsake me.’  
  
2. a) k<sup>hi</sup>ʔɪe    ike    ɹukk<sup>h</sup>ənə    ʒeləŋ-paʔ  
tonight    1DUAL    together    cook-IRR  
‘We (dual) will cook tonight.’  
  
b) apiʔpe    nə    ʃito    ike    ʃo.ɹu-pe    laʔ  
3SG.F    AGT    tomorrow    1DUAL    meet-want    DECL  
‘She wants to meet us (dual) tomorrow.’  
  
3. a) ʃito    isa    t<sup>h</sup>ulu-lim    ɣə-paʔ    saŋ    haŋ-paʔ  
tomorrow    1PL    field-ALL    go-CONV    firewood    carry-IRR

‘We will go (to field) and carry firewood tomorrow.’

- b)    tɔfo    api    athɪuŋ-ɪə    kʰəlaŋ    kʰete    ala-kʰiaʔ    te  
          and    3SG    warrior-NMLZ    one    count    EXIST-S.PST.ASP    COMP  
          isa-ki            kʰian-a-huʔ-te            aɹə-to  
          1PL-DAT    narrate-SEQ-show-COMP    come-PERF  
          ‘He narrated to us that he had lived as one of the warrior.’

## 6.2 Second person

Personal pronoun of the second person refers to the hearer or the addressee. Corresponding to the first person, it consists of three persons as illustrated in **figure 2**. In the given figure, the lexeme /nə/ refer to the second person singular or the addressee which is homophonous with the agentive (§ example 4b) and instrumental marker /nə/ (§ example 8b) in Yimkhiung. The second person singular also marginally differs from its PTB \*naŋ by maintaining the alveolar nasal. The dual form of the second person is expressed by /nəke/ which means ‘both of you’ referring to two addressees exclusive of the speaker. Second person plural is expressed by /nəsa/ ‘you all’. All the three persons of the second person can also occur as an A, S and O argument. The occurrence of a second person in subject and object argument is illustrated in examples (4)-(6). Example (a) is illustrated for subject category and (b) for object category.



Figure 2: Second person

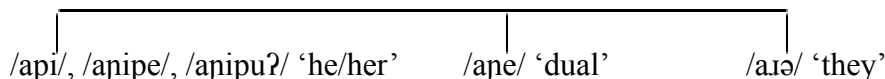
4. a)    nə    yə-paʔ    saŋ    lu-paʔ    aɹaŋ  
          2SG    go-CONV    wood    take-CONV    come  
          ‘You go and bring firewood.’
- b)    i    nə    nə    kilim    tʰijukʰian    kʰian-a    huʔ-paʔ  
          1SG    AGT    2SG    DAT    story    narrate-SEQ    show-IRR  
          ‘I will narrate a story to you.’
5. a)    nəke    ʈu    kiopope    naŋte    mə-kiaaʈʰiʔ  
          2DUAL    TOP    sibling    like    NEG-similar  
          ‘You (dual) doesn’t look like siblings.’
- b)    nəke    tʰuŋkʰiaknə    pinpoŋ    isa    nə    tʰakʰama    zo-ʈiʔ-paʔ  
          2DUAL    BEN    place    1PL    AGT    arrange    keep-give-IRR  
          ʈumənə    muləŋ    tə    sansan  
          that’s why    heart    PROH    worry  
          ‘Don’t worry! We will arrange the place (to stay) for both of you.’
6. a)    nəsa    kʰən    kʰite    tsə-te    tʰə-to  
          2PL    song    very    good-ADV    sing-PERF  
          ‘You (Plural) sang very well.’



- b)    nəsə    a:uŋ    mə-petə-a    ha    h:imo    ak<sup>h</sup>iam    mə-t<sup>h</sup>ə-k<sup>h</sup>uk  
       2PL    help    NEG- if-SEQ    PROX    work    complete    NEG-do-ability  
       ‘I won’t be able to complete this work without your help.’

### 6.3 Third person

The third person is used to refer to a person or things other than the speaker or the hearer (Lyons 1968: 276). Yimkhiung has five forms in third person as shown in **figure 3**. Similar to other Naga languages the third person singular is distinguished for gender. As such, Yimkhiung consists of three forms in the third person singular: /api/, /aŋipe/, and /aŋipu?/. The lexeme /api/ functions as the general term of referent expression to both the genders especially in speech discourse, if the referent is known to the speech participants through previous context or contact. Even so, /aŋi?pe/ and /aŋi?pu?/ is expressed when the gender is unknown to the addressee and for specifying specific gender. The third person dual is expressed by /ape/ ‘both of them’ which is exclusive of the speaker and the addressee. The third person plural is expressed by /a:ə/ ‘they/them’ which has the same form in Sangtam (Imlienla, 2012:107). In alignment with the first and second persons, syntactically the third persons can function as A, S and O arguments. Given examples (7)-(9) exemplified third person in subject and object argument where example (a) provides for subject category and (b) for object category.



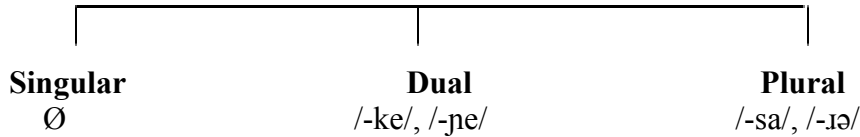
**Figure 3: Third person**

7. a)    api    a:ə-pa?    le    wuŋp<sup>h</sup>uŋ    ʃ<sup>h</sup>iŋ    la-to  
       3SG    come-CONV    and    wungphung    LOC    stay-PERF  
       ‘He came and settled in Wungphung village’
- b)    aŋi?pu?    ʃu-nə    aŋi?pe    k<sup>h</sup>iak    məkt<sup>h</sup>ə  
       3SG.M    DEF-AGT    2SG.F    OBJ    jealous  
       ‘She became jealous of her.’
8. a)    ape    ʃu    liuziŋ-ʃ<sup>h</sup>o  
       3DUAL    TOP    swing-PROG  
       ‘They (dual) are swinging.’
- b)    atunpu?    nə    ape    t<sup>h</sup>uŋk<sup>h</sup>iak    ʃi?kəp    nə    k<sup>h</sup>imi?  
       Lord    AGT    3DUAL    BEN    hide    INST    garment  
       t<sup>h</sup>ə-pa?    k<sup>h</sup>əm-ʃi?  
       made-CONV    cloth-give  
       ‘The Lord made garments of skin and clothed them (dual).’
9. a)    metəmŋo    ŋo-pə    t<sup>h</sup>uŋk<sup>h</sup>iak    a:ə-po    a:ə-k<sup>h</sup>ia?  
       metümnyo    celebrate-PURP    BEN    1PL-PL    come-S.PST.ASP  
       ‘They came to celebrate metümnyo festival.’

- b)    api      nə      a-k<sup>h</sup>aʔ      ʃuʔkiʔ      təʃo      aɪə      məŋəʔ-ʃiʔ  
3SG      AGT      3.POSS-hand      lift      PP      1PL      bless-give  
‘He lifted up his hands and blessed them.’

## 7. Number

According to the definition given by Crystal (2008: 335) number is a “grammatical category used for the analysis of word-classes displaying such contrast as singular (sg), plural (plu), dual (du) (‘two’), trial (‘three’), paucal (‘few’), etc”. Like most Naga languages, Yimkhiung number marking in pronouns distinguishes three numbers- singular, dual and plural- as shown in **figure 4**. An interesting feature in the formation of dual and plural form is that the first and second person shows a regular pattern of marking, however the third person is formed by a distinct marker in both dual and plural form.



**Figure 4:** Number in personal pronouns

### 7.1 Singular pronoun

A singular pronoun encodes a single entity. The singular form in Yimkhiung is monomorphemic and it functions as the stem for the formation of dual and plural form. There are five singular pronouns in Yimkhiung namely /i/, /nə/ and /api/, /aɪiʔpe/ and /aɪiʔpuʔ/. The singular form is unmarked like most TB languages.

Examples (10-12) illustrates singular pronoun in sentential form where example (10) illustrates first person singular /i/ occurring in subject category; example (11) provides second person singular occurring as the O argument of the clause, and example (12) provides third person singular /api/ as the subject of the clause.

10.    i      k<sup>h</sup>iaknu-ʃim      ɲamʃiʔ-ʃ<sup>h</sup>oʔ  
1SG    pig-fodder      mix-PROG  
‘I am mixing pig fodder.’
11.    i      nə      nə      mə-laksaʔ  
1SG    AGT    2SG                  NEG-kill  
(If you spare their life) I would not kill you.’
12.    api    ʃu    isa    kiulon-jo    chairman    aʔ  
3SG    TOP    1PL    village-GEN    chairman    COP  
‘He is our village chairman.’

### 7.2 Dual pronoun

The number dual refers to two people, things or places. Personal pronoun of the dual form are formed by suffixing the pronominal dual marker /-ke/ and /-pe/. There are tripartite dual person in Yimkhiung that is /ike/, /nəke/, and /ape/ representing first person dual, second person dual and third person dual. First person dual and second person dual takes the pronominal dual marker /-ke/ as /ike/ and /nəke/ while the third person is formed by suffixing /-pe/ which is the second syllable of the numeral two /maʔpe/ to the reduced form of the third person singular /a-/ as /ape/ ‘both of them’. The occurrences of the dual forms are illustrated in examples (13)-(15).

Given example (13) provides first person dual /ike/ in the subject category, while example (14) provides for second person dual /nəke/ occurring in the O argument. In Yimkhiung the indirect object can either precede or follow the direct object as well as the A argument so in this example the indirect object is followed by the A and O argument. Example (15) provides third person dual /ape/.

13.    ike        ɹukkʰə        ʃito        ʃamatoɿ        ʃʰiŋ        alonglo-paʔ  
       1DUAL    together    tomorrow    shamator    LOC        return-IRR  
       ‘We (two) are returning back to Shamator tomorrow.’
14.    nəke        tʰuŋkʰiak        i        nə        saŋyəke        lam-paʔ  
       2DUAL        BEN            1SG        AGT        tea            make-IRR  
       ‘I will make tea for both of you (dual).’
15.    aʃu-a        laləʃe        ape        nə        nə        pe-a        təkʰe-paʔ  
       late-SEQ    though    3DUAL        AGT        2SG        take-SEQ    drop-IRR  
       ‘Even if it is late, they (dual) will drop you.’

### 7.3 Plural pronoun

The number plural indicates entities that are of more than two. In Yimkhiung, the plural are are formed by suffixing the pronominal plural markers /-sa/ and /-ɿə/ to the independent singular form. Corresponding to singular and dual, there are tripartite plural that is /isa/, /nəsa/ and /aɿə/ representing first person plural, second person plural and third person plural. The first and second person plural form are formed by suffixing /-sa/ as /isa/ ‘we’ and /nəsa/ ‘you’, while the pronominal plural /-ɿə/ is suffixed to the first syllable of the third person /a-/ as /aɿə/. It is to be noted that the plural form of the personal pronouns can co-occur with the general form of the plural marker /-po/ which leads to double plural formation even in pronouns as in example (18). However, the choice of using double plural is dependent on the speaker and therefore it can be dropped. In this case, the marking of the plural marker /-po/ is optional in personal pronouns. Examples (16)-(18) illustrates personal pronoun of the plural form in sentential form, example (16) illustrates first person plural /isa/ while example (17) provides for second person plural /nəsa/ and example (18) provides for third person plural /aɿə/ co-occurring with the general plural marker.

16.    amuzo    məjam.ɿə-po    kʰiakə-a    isa    ʃu    tʰɿənpuʔ    tsəʔɿə    aʔ  
       love    brethren-PL    now-SEQ    1PL    TOP    God        children    COP

‘Beloved, now we are God’s children.’

17. aɹəpə kim ʃʰiŋ-a nəsa ʃu isa nə liaŋ-kʰi-pa?  
 next time PP-SEQ 2PL TOP 1PL AGT host-NF-IRR  
 ‘Next time we will host you (plu).’

18. aɹə-po maŋʃi jimlu-pə yə-to  
 3PL-PL maize harvest-PURP go-PERF  
 ‘They went to harvest maize.’

## 8. Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronoun encodes possession or ownership, whole part relations (including body parts), and kinship relations of the possessor. Generally, it consists of a possessor and a possessed referent. Possessive pronoun in Yimkhiung can be constructed in two ways:

- i) By using personal pronoun
- ii) By using the genitive marker /jo/

In the first type of possessive pronoun construction, the possessor nor the possessed referent carry any possessive marker to indicate possession. However, the expression of possession or ownership is derived from the personal pronoun where it also functions as a modifying element to the noun. Inalienable nouns such as body parts, kinship relations, inherent cultural artifacts or property are expressed without the use of genitive markers as in examples (19)-(21). Yet, inherent cultural artifacts or properties can be marked with a genitive marker when it occurs predicatively as in (22) and (23).

19. ha i-lo a?  
 DEM.PROX 1SG-land cop  
 ‘This is my land.’

20. ha-pu? ha ikə a?  
 DEM.PROX-M EMPH.DEM father-in-law cop  
 ‘He is my father-in-law.’

21. a-ʃʰike a-kʰa? nə nana paʔ-to  
 3SG.POSS-tears 3SG.POSS-hand INST wipe away-PERF  
 ‘He wiped away the tears with his hands.’

22. ha ɹuŋʃʰən ʃu i-jo a?  
 PROX mekhala TOP 1SG-GEN COP  
 ‘This mekhala (wrapped around cloth worn by women) is mine.’

23. aʃəɹə-a alo-ha aɹə-jo a?  
 actually-SEQ land-PROX 3PL-GEN COP  
 ‘Actually, this land is theirs.’

Possessive constructions using genitive markers are formed by means of morphological suffixation with the independent personal pronoun as in **table 3**. The use of genitive marker is obligatorily marked when it occurs in predicative form or in object category. In this type of construction the possessed entity precedes the possessor. Such examples are illustrated in (24)-(26).

24. jinmi pukk<sup>h</sup>əp la-k<sup>h</sup>i læptəkhi ʈu i-jo a?  
 heaven under EXIST-NF everything TOP 1SG-GEN COP  
 ‘Everything under heaven is mine (says the Lord).’
25. miʔmæt<sup>h</sup>əm muŋtsə təʃo amuzo məzoməpuŋ-te nə-jo t<sup>h</sup>aŋ  
 mercy peace PP love abundance-COMP 2SG-GEN do-IMP  
 ‘Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.’
26. təməte jinmi kiulon<sup>h</sup>t<sup>h</sup>ə ju aə-jo a?  
 for heaven kingdom TOP 3PL-GEN COP  
 ‘...For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’

Person	Singular	Dual	Plural
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Person</b>	/i(jo)/ ‘my(mine)’	/ike(jo)/ ‘our(s)’	/isa(jo)/ ‘our(s)’
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Person</b>	/nə(jo)/ ‘your(yours)’	/nəke(jo)/ ‘your(s)’	/nəsa(jo)/ ‘our(s)’
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Person</b>	/api(jo)/ ‘his/her(s)’ /apiʔpe(jo)/ ‘her(s)’ (female) /apiʔpuʔ(jo)/ ‘his’(male)	/ape(jo)/ ‘their(s)’	/arə(jo)/ ‘their(s)’

**Table 3:** Possessive pronouns

## 9. Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns function to ‘identify the participants of an event by locating them with reference to the spatio-temporal location of the speech act participants (Netra, 2016: 187). Such pronouns in Yimkhiung can be classified into four distinct categories as shown in **table 4** depending on the spatial location in reference with the speech participants. Basing on the choice of the spatial referent, Yimkhiung exhibits a ‘person-oriented’ system ‘in which one of the demonstratives denotes a referent in the proximity of the hearer’ (Deissel 2013). The demonstrative pronoun can be marked by the personal pronoun plural marker /ɬə/ and /-po/ for indicating plural entities. Structurally, it can either precede or follow the noun in a clause or sentences.

Demonstrative pronoun	Gloss
/haʃu/	‘this (near the speaker and the hearer)’
/hoʃu/	‘that (away from the speaker and hearer)’
/ʃuʃu/	‘that (near the hearer but away from the speaker)’
/ɣənə/	‘that (further away from the speaker and hearer)’

*Table 4: Demonstrative pronouns*

As illustrated in the above table, the demonstrative pronoun /haʃu/ is expressed for indexing proximate objects that are close to the speaker or addressee as in example (27). For indexing things or objects that are not near from the speech participants yet visible, the lexeme /hoʃu/ is expressed as in (28). This deixis is analysed as medial in terms of their deictic types as it is neither close like proximate nor remote from the speaker and addressee.

On the other hand, when the object is close to the addressee but away from the speaker the demonstrative pronoun /ʃuʃu/ is expressed for indexing such referent. This is exemplified in example (29). Furthermore, for indexing things or objects that are remote or when the spatial referent is further away from the speech participant /ɣənə/ is expressed. In the context of the degree of remoteness, if the referent is far from the speech participants but visible to the sight, the speaker (s) generally point using physical hand gesture as a pointer towards the referent and by stressing the lexeme with high tone to indicate the entity. Moreover, the referent can be out of sight or it can be known to the speech participant from previous knowledge or through previous context, and also the referent can be unknown to both the participants as in (30).

27. alipe.ə nə ʃe ha ahɪŋkʰaɾi? juk-ʃʰo  
 women AGT also PROX ahingkharih wear-PROG  
 ‘This ahingkharih (bangle) is also worn by (Yimkhiung) women.’
28. hoʃu kutsʰəmpə  
 DEM.MED kuthsümpü  
 ‘That is kuthsümpü (a headband worn by Yimkhiung women).’
29. ʃuʃu tʰəʔ.ɿŋ  
 DEM thsührung  
 ‘That is Thsührung (a spear use by Yimkhiung man during traditional dance).’
30. ʃumənə nə kʰiakə ɣənə kʰiŋke-lim ɣə-a-pa?  
 that’s why 2SG now DEM.REMT foreign-ALL go-SEQ-CONV  
 -aŋ te  
 IMP EMPH.DP

‘(If you stay here you will be killed) That’s why now you go away to a foreign land....’

Additionally, proximate demonstratives pronoun can be reduplicated as /haʃu ha/ ‘this’. Generally, such a phenomenon occurs in speech discourse when the speaker(s) desire to emphasize on the entity. As such, these demonstratives also function as emphatic demonstrative pronouns as in example (31).

31. haʃu       ha       jimk<sup>hiuŋ</sup>       ju       nə       ku.ruŋku.ɿo       te  
 DEM.PROX   EMPH.DEM   Yimkhiung   language   in   kurungkuro   COMP  
 ʃi-ʃ<sup>ho</sup>?  
 call- PROG  
 ‘This is called kurungkuro (headgear) in Yimkhiung.’

## 10. Reflexive pronouns

According to König, et.al (2013) reflexive pronouns are “expressions which are prototypically used to indicate that a non-subject argument of a transitive predicate is co-referential with (or bound by) the subject”. In Yimkhiung personal pronoun can exhibit reflexivity by employing reflexive lexemes such as /laŋzə/, /laŋɿə/ and /kətaʔ/. The reflexive markers /laŋzə/ and /laŋɿə/ is synonymous and it implies ‘self’ in reflexive context though its literal meaning means ‘alone’. The other reflexive marker /kətak/ also refers to ‘self’. These lexemes can be interchangeably expressed to indicate reflexive pronouns depending on the choice of the speakers. The reflexive marker follows the personal or a noun in Yimkhiung. Reflexive construction in Yimkhiung are exemplify in (32)-(34) using the lexeme /laŋzə/.

32. i    laŋzə    la-ʃ<sup>ho</sup>?    ʃumonə    i    laŋzə    təkiʔt<sup>hə</sup>ɿa-k<sup>h</sup>iaʔ  
 1SG   alone   stay-PROG   so   1SG   REFL   cook   -S.PST.ASP  
 ‘I stay alone so I cook by myself.’
33. tale   api   ɣə   təʃo   laŋzə   səksaʔ-a-paʔ   -to  
 then 3SG   went   and   REFL   hang-SEQ-CONV   -PERF  
 ‘(Judas threw the money in the temple). Then, he went and hanged himself.’
34. aɿə-po    aɿə    laŋzə    nə    taŋk<sup>ho</sup>    laŋte    ŋə Ø  
 3PL-PL   3PL   REFL   AGT   grasshopper   like   see PST  
 ‘They saw themselves as grasshopper.’

## 11. Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns are employed in forming content questions and ‘they indicate what information is being requested’ (Payne, 1997:300). Generally, interrogative pronouns are listener-oriented. There are ten interrogative pronouns in Yimkhiung that express different ontological meanings such as person, thing, possessive, locative, time, manner, reason, value/amount as shown in **table 5**. These interrogative pronouns are free as well as derived from.

There are two main interrogatives that functions as the base in forming another interrogative pronouns in Yimkhiung that is /təmə/ ‘what’ and /sepə/ or /je/ ‘who’. The interrogative pronoun /təmə/ is exclusively used for inanimate entities while /sepə/ or /je/ is expresses for person category. The interrogative pronoun of the reason category is derived from /təmə/ by suffixing /tʰəkʰi/ or /te/ as /təmətsʰəkʰi/ or /təməte/. There are two interrogative pronouns derived from the person interrogative pronoun ‘who’. The interrogative pronoun of the object person category ‘whom’ is derived from ‘who’ along with the dative case marker /kilim/ as /jekilim/. Further, the interrogative pronoun of the possessive form ‘whose’ which encodes for possession or ownership of things or person is also derived from the person interrogative pronoun /je/ by suffixing the genitive marker /jo/ as /jejo/.

The other interrogative pronouns take the formative interrogative pronominal prefix /kə-/ with the generic meaning. Such interrogative pronouns are, /kəpə/ or /kuʃu/ ‘which’ is used for interrogating ‘types’ from an indefinite item, /kəjimki/ ‘when’ is used for interrogating time, consisting of /kə-/ and /jimki/ referring to ‘time’, /kəte/ is used for interrogating the ‘process’ of an event, /kətəkʰə/ is used for asking the ‘value’ or ‘quantity’ of an object. There are two locative interrogatives pronoun that are used for location and direction by taking the formative marker /kə-/ with the locative case markers /-ʃʰiŋ/ and /lim/ as /kəʃʰiŋ/ and /kəlim/ meaning ‘where’. The former locative interrogative pronoun is expressed for interrogating the location or place while the latter is used for direction.

Interrogative pronouns	Ontological categories	Gloss
/təmə/	Thing	‘what’
/kəpə/ or /kuʃu/	Person/thing	‘which’
/sepə/ or /je/	Person	‘who’
/jejo/	Possession	‘whose’
/jekilim/	Person (object)	‘whom’
/kəʃʰiŋ/	Place	‘where’
/kəjimki/	Time	‘when’
/təmətsʰəkʰi/ or /təməte/	Reason	‘why’
/kəte/	Process	‘how’
/kətəkʰə/	Quantity/Value	‘how many’/‘how much’

*Table 5: Interrogative pronouns*

The interrogative pronouns can either occur at clause initial, medial or at clause final. Some examples of interrogative pronouns in sentential form are exemplified in (35)-(39).



35.    nə     ʃekilim     kiŋayə-ʃʰoʔ  
       2SG   whom     worship-PROG  
       ‘Whom do you worship?’
36.    təʃe   tʰɛŋpuʔ   kilim   atsaŋlo-pə   tʰə-te   isa   ʃu   ʃe-aʔ  
       but   God         DAT   response-INF   do-COMP   1PL   TOP   who-COP  
       ‘But who are we to talk back to God?’
37.    təmətʰəkʰi   nə         haʃʰiŋ     aɪə-kʰia  
       why         2SG         here        came-Q  
       ‘Why did you come here?’
38.    nəsa    kəʃʰiŋ    la-ʃʰoʔ  
       2PL    where    stay-PROG  
       ‘Where are you staying?’
39.    nəke    ʃamatoɪ   ʃʰiŋ   kəʃimki   aloŋ-kʰia  
       2DUAL   Shamator   LOC   when     came-Q  
       ‘When have you (dual) come to Shamator?’

## 12. Conclusion

The paper, though preliminary, provided a morphological account of pronouns in Yimkhiung. From the analysis above, it can be concluded that Yimkhiung pronouns are free forms and can occupy the place of a noun. It is marked for plural, gender and case markers. Personal pronouns consist of three person forms with gender distinction in third person singular. Corresponding to person, the study analysed three numbers: singular, dual and plural. The singular form is unmarked while dual and plural forms are marked via dual and plural affixes. The possessive pronoun bears genitive marker/-jo/ when it occurs predicatively. In demonstrative pronouns, the study analysed four ways distinction depending on the spatial reference from the speaker and hearer. Yimkhiung possesses ten interrogative pronouns comprising free and derived forms employed for different interrogative purposes. Thus, this paper shed light on the pronoun system of Yimkhiung spoken in Nagaland.

## Abbreviations

ADV- adverb	INF- infinitive
AGT- agentive	IRR- irrealis
ALL- allative	LOC- locative
ASP- aspect	M- male
BEN- benefactive	MED- medial
DAT- dative	NEG- negation
DECL- declarative	NF- non-finite
DEF- definite	NMLZ- nominalizer
DEM- demonstrative	OB- object
DP- discourse particle	PERF- perfective
DUAL- dual	PL- plural
COMP- complement	POSS- possessive

CONV- converb	PROX- proximate
COP- copula	PST- past
EMP- emphatic	PURP- purposive
EXIST- existential	REMT- remote
F- female	REFL- reflexive
GEN- genitive	SEQ- sequential
IMP- imperative	SG- singular
INST- instrumental	TOP- topic
	Q- question

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## Forensic Linguistic Study of Empirical testing methods for Author Identification of unknown online messages on social media-Twitter

Leena Potdar<sup>1</sup>

Pillai College of Engineering, Maharashtra

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### ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the use of empirical testing methods to identify the author of unknown online messages on social media- Twitter. Social networking sites help people to communicate. It also gives space for criminal activities. Forensic linguistics involves the methodical study of language to resolve forensic problems. It tries to find out one author in a group of probable authors. The authorship identification is carried out to find out his distinctiveness and identifiability. The selected methods analyse the written language used in social networking communication. The study tries to explore the notion of linguistic fingerprints. For this research work, Twitter posts or tweets from six writers were collected and one sample from these known writers was labelled as suspect writing. The experiment used five different empirical testing methods to find out the real author of the suspect writing. Out of five methods, three methods worked appropriately and two methods could get 50% success in finding the real author of the text. In short text analysis, intra-author variation is observed. Short texts have constancy problems which makes it difficult to compare authorship of unknown text in a forensic setting.

## 1. Introduction

Forensic linguistics is the branch of applied linguistics that involves the methodical study of language to resolve forensic problems. The uses of forensic linguistics comprise voice recognition, explanation of stated meaning in legal writings, examination of communication in legal situations, explanation of proposed meaning in oral and written statements, recognizing author, the legal language, study of courtroom language etc. Forensic researchers try to find out the regular similarities that help to categorize things in the verification process that will help to separate one thing from the other. The use of language in a recorded message or an anonymous letter can be examined to find out whether similar language is used by certain groups or individuals. People hardly use pen and pencil these days. We communicate using electronic documents. The traditional handwriting analysis method will not work for finding out authors of electronically produced documents. The language of a document remains independent, it doesn't make any difference whether the document is handwritten, printed or stored electronically.

These days social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn and Myspace have become an important part of life. These sites provide a platform for public opinion

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [lpotdar@mes.ac.in](mailto:lpotdar@mes.ac.in)

but at the same time, it also gives opportunity to criminal activities. Social media and electronic communications exhibit different forms of language use. In this new era, it is interesting for Forensic linguists to search for one author from a group of possible authors.

Twitter is a microblogging facility provided online that will share short messages to groups of people through a computer or mobile phone. Like other social networking sites, Twitter deals with instant messaging technology and creates a network of users who communicate the entire day with short messages or tweets. Tweets may be on any subject, ranging from jokes to news, but they cannot exceed 140 characters. Initially, Twitter was a free SMS with a social networking element. Later celebrities, political leaders and business houses started using Twitter as a communication tool. Twitter changed drastically from a hobby to an every-minute news source that surpassed political borders.

## **2. Research Objectives**

The present research work aims to find out whether empirical testing methods can be used to find the real author of unknown online messages when the data set is limited. There are many computer software for the analysis of large data sets but they cannot be used for small data sets. In a forensic setting, identifying the real author of the unknown online text with a limited data set is a challenging task. The research focuses on certain empirical testing methods to determine the authorship of unknown online messages. The present research work deals with six authors with different backgrounds and with limited messages. The research assumes that in real-life forensic investigations, there might be limited suspects with their limited messages. The experiment used five different testing methods to find out the real author of the suspected writing. It is observed that selected testing methods worked appropriately and could find the real author.

## **3. Theoretical background**

An individual can consider himself different from others. There is no guarantee that an individual can be identified only on linguistic evidence. A written sample whose author has been covered or masked can be analysed using forensic linguistics. The authorship identification in forensic settings can be considered to find out his distinctiveness and identifiability. J. Farrington (1996) concluded that speakers and writers retain their language habits. Eagleson (1994) wrote that authors carry specific writing structures that can be deep-rooted habits while writing. The writing of one author may look similar to the other author irrespective of subject matter and style. In such cases, linguistic comparison can be used. Therefore, the sentence structure, vocabulary, inflections, spelling, punctuation and other features of an unidentified text can be compared with the text of a known author to find out whether it is written by the same person or a different one.

Is it possible to apply empirical testing methods for the analysis of messages posted on publicly accessible social networking sites such as Twitter to discover adequate differences in every writer's writing to decide authorship? Kotze (2010,187) said that "the multifarious nature of the evidence contained in written texts, whether digitised or not, requires a more holistic approach to the mining of texts for significant features than restricting these to purely linguistic characteristics".

The study is focused on the Forensic linguistics analysis of written language in social networking communications. There are different forms of electronic communication for social purposes and social media is one of them. Social media communication is a short, impulsive and unedited text which is closer to spoken communication than to written communication. The research problem concerns the use of empirical methods for authorship attribution on social networking site Twitter using a combination of testing methods. The study aims to find out stylistic patterns and general habits using punctuation marks, language analysis and structure analysis of the doubtful digital text.

Attempts to decide the authorship of unknown texts have traditionally relied on lexical or orthographic features. In the present article, the outcomes of experiments trying the experiential dependability of language-based author identification methods are described.

The idiolect is considered as an individual language. It has been observed that all individuals understand and use language differently. Every individual will use grammatically different language than the other individuals to read, write and speak. The idiolect is the user's exclusive mixture of his language understanding, mental links and other language influences. Language can be tested in people whose language and vocabulary structures are very useful to identify the author in certain cases.

According to some scholars, each one uses language differently. It can be labelled as a linguistic fingerprint and this difference in language can be seen just like a fingerprint. According to this approach, the linguistic fingerprint is a group of signs that brands a writer as unique. We find less proof to accept the idea of linguistic fingerprint even though it is a very strong concept. The idea of the linguistic fingerprint is extensively spread in journals, publications and the internet. It is not very easy to find a single author from a group of authors. One should refrain from giving the opinion that there are easy and automatic ways to guess the author.

Chaski in *Linguistic Authentication and Reliability* (1999) has elaborated on a few common misinterpretations regarding the use of language and methods used for them. She verified if methods based on certain misinterpretations work in a dependable and accurate way to find out the author of suspicious writing. She followed empirical testing methods for author identification.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

The Twitter posts from six writers were collected, and one writing sample from these known six writers was taken and labelled as suspect writing (SW). The number of tweets was different for each writer. For each author, an average of 6-10 tweets were taken. The aim was to test different authorship testing methods to find out whether they help in identifying the real writer from the set. As Twitter has a document length limitation (140) characters, both the suspect and known documents are short in word length.

The known writing samples were chosen based on demographic features that would identify them as suspects. The six writers were selected to form the pilot subset. The demographic details are as follows:

Subject ID	Gender	Age	Education
A001	F	36	Education
A002	F	46	Graduate
A003	F	70	Post-graduate
A004	F	45	Higher Secondary
A005	M	58	Post-graduate
A006	M	62	Graduate

The experiments carried out in this paper were planned to be redesigned close to the real task of a forensic examination. A set of identified documents and a questioned document were given for analysis. These documents were unedited, authentic writings; they comprised different numbers of words, and they were brief. These tests are proposed to examine the short and less in number texts as forensically important documents are often brief and cannot be enlarged. The identified documents are usually brief in length and limited in number. The tests utilize data including the limited numbers so that it can be applied to the actual casework. It is assumed that if this kind of technique works on a limited number, it will work on cases with more words and more documents. At the same time, if the tried method cannot work precisely on fewer numbers, the researchers who follow this method will have to show that the method can work with lengthy documents and more numbers.

These experimentations can consider just two likely solutions. In these tests, the tried hypothesis can show that the documents are written by different writers or it can prove that the suspect document is written by the real author. The investigation will not consider any third conclusion that the tried hypothesis is not able to choose the writer on the basis of texts because every hypothesis is checked with the same text sets. The study wants to highlight the testing capability of the hypothesis. At the same time when the precision of each hypothesis is considered, certain features like the length of the text also get highlighted.

#### *4.1 Data Collection*

The experiments were performed on a set of documents written by four women and two men, ranging from 36 to 70 years old. Out of these six authors, three are graduates, two are post-graduates and one is with higher secondary education. All these authors studied English as their first language. They have been named as A001, A002, A003, A004, A005 and A006.

#### *4.2 Sample data*

Texts written by the authors were labelled so that they could be easily identified. One unnamed document was branded as SW, suspect writing. Document SW was taken from the writing samples of one of the six authors.

ID	A001	A002	A003	A004	A005	A006	SW
Text1-words	39	45	44	27	43	49	
Text2-words	26	53	33	31	50	51	
Text3-words	48	34	36	36	32	43	
Text4-words	39	35	41	38	39	53	
Text5-words	25	41	36	29	25	37	
Text6-words	44	28	38	25	27	51	
Text7-words	57	40	37	21		49	
Text8-words	37			22			
Text9-words	41						
Text10-words	38						
Total words	394	276	265	229	216	332	52

**Table 1:** Number of words in each text from the six authors.

The purpose of the experiment is to find out whether the language-based method to identify the author works appropriately to differentiate between texts written by different authors and accurately groups SW with texts written by the real author. The methods calculate the data

and statistically test it to find out the possibility of different trials for every text that matches or does not match with the same author.

## 5. Discussion

In the present research work, a total of 45 tweets from six different Twitter accounts were collected. The selected authors have diverse backgrounds including cultural, educational, social and political. To find out the real author of the suspect text, five different empirical testing methods were used. The first method of calculating TTR and PACE to find out vocabulary richness proved successful as it could assign the real author to the suspect text with a success rate of 72%. The stylometric measurement considered average function words, vocabulary density, average sentence length and words per sentence. This method worked appropriately as it can identify the real author of suspect text with a success rate of 70%. The third method considered punctuation mark frequencies. The punctuation marks in every post were counted and the Chi-square value was compared. The method could assign the real author to the suspect text with a success rate of 85%. The fourth experimental method used Hapax-Legomena. It is observed that the HLR scores of every writer when compared with each other, couldn't identify the real author of the suspect text successfully. It had a success rate of 52.38%. The final method considered the Readability score for every author. When these scores were compared with each other using the Chi-square test, the method couldn't identify the real author of the suspect text successfully. It had a success rate of 50%. After testing different methods, we can clearly state in some methods that text SW was written by author A002. It allowed me to interpret results in the light of the repetition of methods. These methods have been used beforehand in document analysis. It can be concluded that if a specific method correctly assigns text to the author, it is a reliable method but if it assigns in the wrong way, it is an unreliable method.

### 5.1 Vocabulary richness

The first test was used to decide whether vocabulary richness helps to identify the author. In research work related to linguistics and education, the measurement of vocabulary richness is used widely including authorship identification, forensic linguistics, language development etc. The Type-Token ratio (TTR) is the ratio of different words which can also be referred to as unique words to the total number of words called tokens. As the length of a document increases, the author will generate new words, the measurement of this ability is called PACE. It is the ratio of Types to Tokens,  $PACE = 1/TTR$ . PACE is not related to the length of the text and genre.

In numerical linguistics, measuring vocabulary richness is an old and traditional method. Every individual uses specific vocabulary. This fact is used in the measurement of vocabulary richness. To analyse genre and authorship, linguists often use the notion of vocabulary richness. The easy way to find out vocabulary richness is by measuring the type-token ratio (TTR). It is a simple ratio between the number of types and tokens in a text. The result shows the variation in vocabulary. The higher TTR shows more vocabulary variation. It ultimately depends on the length of the text. It could be one of the hurdles for TTR and word frequency. Many researchers tried to work on this issue, but it has not been fully achieved.

The token is the number of total words in a text, and  $tokens = N$ . The number of unique words in the text is called types,  $types = V$ . We calculate TTR as  $V/N$  and PACE as  $1/TTR$  for the



texts of each writer. Compare each writer's TTR and PACE to each other's. Here I have combined all texts of a writer into a single text as these Twitter posts were very short. The results are shown in Table 2.

SUBJECT ID	TEXT	TOKEN	TYPES	TTR	PACE(1/TTR)
A001	10	394	336	0.852	1.1737
A002	7	276	244	0.884	1.1312
A003	7	265	217	0.818	1.2212
A004	8	229	210	0.917	1.0905
A005	6	216	166	0.768	1.3012
A006	7	332	263	0.792	1.2624
SW	1	52	46	0.884	1.1312

**Table 2:** Result of Type-Token ratio and PACE

Here TTR score of A002 exactly matches with SW, who is the real author. But at the same time, some authors have also shown considerable close scores when they were paired with each other with an error rate of 28 %. The TTR method could appropriately assign A002 as the author of the suspect writing.

The TTR of SW and A002 is exactly similar. The SW is taken from A002. Can this experimental method identify the real author of the text? The observation shows that the TTR of A001, A002, A003 and SW are quite close. An analyst may think that texts A001, A002, A003 and SW are written by a single author. The method is successful when the analyst has a set of known authors and one suspect writing. Table 3 shows the distinguishing ability of the TTR method where the similarities of TTRs are compared. The success rate of this method is 72 %.

Author pairings	Differentiated
A001/SW	No
A002/SW	-
A003/SW	No
A004/SW	Yes
A005/SW	Yes
A006/SW	Yes
A001/A002	No
A001/A003	No
A001/A004	Yes
A001/A005	Yes
A001/A006	Yes
A002/A003	No
A002/A004	Yes

A002/A005	Yes
A002/A006	Yes
A003/A004	Yes
A003/A005	Yes
A003/A006	Yes
A004/A005	Yes
A004/A006	Yes
A005/A006	No

**Table 3:** Distinguishing ability of the TTR method when compared

## 5.2 Stylometric Features

The second experimental method is stylometric. In this method, the linguistic forms from the author's texts are extracted to find out the real author. To find out the real author, it is assumed that every author has a unique writing style. The writing style of every author may be modified over some time, but it remains unique. In Forensic analysis, the author of a document is decided by examining stylometric features in the written text.

There are three main research areas to decide the author of a document. They are authorship attribution, authorship confirmation and authorship classification. Authorship attribution finds out the most likely author of an unknown text by comparing it with the identified available texts. Authorship verification checks whether an unknown text was written or not written by a specific person. Authorship characterization is useful for choosing the characteristics like gender, age etc. of the author of an unknown text.

The problems to decide the author of online messages are given below.

1. The online text is brief in length.

2. The style of writing of an online text is not formal and the vocabulary pattern is not constant.
3. There is a considerable difference between normal text and online text in structure, style and format.
4. If an author mixes code, it will create another task in document analysis.

The handwriting analysis will not work for the authorship of electronically generated texts. It doesn't make any impact on the language of a text whether it is handwritten, printed or electronically generated. The texts from six authors are analysed to extract stylistic features, considering the use of function words, vocabulary density, average sentence length and words per sentence. The results are stated in table 4.

SUBJECT ID	Average function words	Vocabulary density	Average sentence length	Words per sentence
A001	19	0.635	13.745	17.1
A002	21.14	0.664	17.33	26.5
A003	13.42	0.688	10.16	18.8
A004	8.875	0.813	11.21	9.6
A005	17.33	0.662	19.20	18
A006	26.71	0.591	15.94	16.8
SW	25	0.904	10.4	26

**Table 4:** Result from stylometric analysis

The average function words used by text writers can be compared. The SW matches with A006 and A002 both. The SW is closer to A006 whereas A002 is the real author of SW. The

vocabulary density of SW hardly matches with other writers. An analyst can assume that texts written by A001, A002, A003 and A005 are written by a single author. The vocabulary density cannot decide the real author of the SW. The average sentence length of the texts can be compared. The SW matches with A003 instead of A002. The last category, stylometric analysis is words per sentence, here the SW matches with A002. This specific category can discriminate against other writers from the real author of the text. The stylometric technique of calculating words per sentence can properly allocate A002 as the author of the suspect text.

### 5.3 Punctuation Mark Frequencies

The third experimental method is to find out whether Punctuation mark frequencies discriminate between authors. A table is made for each punctuation mark noted in the sample texts. The data is analysed using the chi-square test. To find out the use of punctuation marks, frequencies are counted shown in Table 5.

Subjects	A001	A002	A003	A004	A005	A006	SW
Period	8	13	14	7	11	20	3
Comma	15	18	1	18	5	15	4
Apostrophe	6	3	0	3	3	8	0
Hyphen	2	1	4	5	1	3	0
Exclamation mark	9	2	0	10	1	1	1
Question mark	0	1	1	13	0	0	0
Colon	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Quotation mark	0	2	0	1	0	0	0

Parenthesis	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Slash	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ellipsis	1	0	1	3	0	0	0

	A001/SW	A002/SW	A003/SW	A004/SW	A005/SW	A006/SW
Chi square	3.821	2.320	12.62	7.713	4.025	4.5839
Degree of freedom	7	7	5	8	5	4
Critical value	2.167	2.167	1.145	2.733	1.145	0.711

**Table 5:** Punctuation marks noted in tweets

The possibility of the usage of punctuation patterns by the same author is tested here. Here the sameness or no difference is seen in A002 and SW compared to other writers. Punctuation patterns can easily differentiate between writers but the difference is not very large. The SW is taken from A002. If the Chi-square value of each writer with the suspect writer is considered, the difference is not much. If a greater number of messages are taken, the difference may become larger. The difference shows that the writer is different. The following tables show the differences among writers when compared with each other. The success rate of this method is 85%.

	A001/A002	A001/A003	A001/A004	A001/A005	A001/A006
Chi square	14.21	28.33	16.04	9.40	14.88

Degree of freedom	10	9	9	7	7
Critical value	3.940	3.325	3.325	2.167	2.167

Here Chi-square value cannot differentiate between A001/A002 and A001/A006.

	A002/A003	A002/A004	A002/A005	A002/A006
Chi square	21.87	22.35	7.82	8.99
Degree of freedom	8	9	8	7
Critical value	2.733	3.325	2.733	2.167

Here there is a lot of similarity between the Chi-square value of A002/A005 and A002/A006.

	A003/A004	A003/A005	A003/A006
Chi square	32.056	11.80	16.99
Degree of freedom	8	7	6
Critical value	2.733	2.167	1.635

	A004/A005	A004/ A006
Chi square	21.742	33.415
Degree of freedom	8	8
Critical value	2.733	2.733

	A005/A006
Chi square	3.2549
Degree of freedom	5
Critical value	1.145

#### 5.4 Hapax Legomena

The fourth experimental test considered the Hapax Legomena of authors. Does it help to find out the author of the suspect writing? The total number of words in the text are counted, tokens=N. The number of words occurring once in the text is counted, types=V1, it is the number of Hapax Legomena. Calculate the Ratio of Hapax Legomena to Tokens (HLR) for the texts of each writer. Every writer's HLR score is compared with the other's score.

SUBJECT ID	TEXT	TOKEN(N)	V1	HLR
A001	10	394	200	0.5076



A002	7	276	152	0.5507
A003	7	265	151	0.5698
A004	8	229	180	0.7860
A005	6	216	126	0.5833
A006	7	332	185	0.5572
SW	1	52	44	0.8461

**Table 6:** HLR score of each author

Author pairings	Differentiated
A001/SW	Yes
A002/SW	Yes
A003/SW	Yes
A004/SW	Yes
A005/SW	Yes
A006/SW	Yes

A001/A002	No
A001/A003	No
A001/A004	Yes
A001/A005	No
A001/A006	No
A002/A003	No
A002/A004	Yes
A002/A005	No
A002/A006	No
A003/A004	Yes
A003/A005	No
A003/A006	No
A004/A005	Yes
A004/A006	Yes

A005/A006	No
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**Table 7:** *Distinguishing ability of HLR score when compared*

The success rate of this experimental method is 52.38%. It may not be reliable to find out the real author from the list of suspect authors.

### 5.5 Readability

The fifth experimental method used for deciding the author of a text is the readability result. An impartial measurement of the complexity of text is readability. The higher score indicates that the text is easy to read and comprehend. Table 8 shows the readability score for each author. The comparison can be done using the score.

Subjects	A001	A002	A003	A004	A005	A006	SW
FLESCH READING EASE	64.13	61.81	22.69	46.14	54.51	63.70	72.63
FLESCH-KINCAID GRADE LEVEL	8.39	8.43	14.16	8.83	10.23	8.41	5.71
DALE-CHALL FORMULA	8.90	9.22	12.24	11.38	10.01	7.66	8.4
GUNNING FOG INDEX	7.58	7.27	10.7	6.28	10.21	8.38	5.7
FORECAST GRADE LEVEL	10.56	11.00	14.17	13.08	10.75	11.00	10.19

**Table 8:** *The Readability score of each author*

For FLESCH READING EASE, the SW's score is closer to A001 than A002. The closeness of scores can also be observed among the authors A001, A006 and A002. For the

FLESCH-KINCAID GRADE LEVEL, the SW's score doesn't go closer to any writer. Rather A001, A002 A004 and A006 have closer scores. The analyst may think that A001, A002 A004 and A006 are written by the same writer. For DALE-CHALL FORMULA, the score for SW goes closer to A001 than A002. For GUNNING FOG INDEX, the SW's score goes closer to A004 than A002. For the FORECAST GRADE LEVEL, the score for SW goes closer to A001, A005 A002 and A006. This experimental method may not be very useful to identify the real author of SW. It failed to identify the real author of the suspected writing.

	<b>A001/SW</b>	<b>A002/SW</b>	A003/SW	A004/SW	A005/SW	<b>A006/SW</b>
Chi square	<b>1.2784</b>	<b>1.5342</b>	28.7502	5.9415	5.06311	<b>1.6168</b>
Degree of freedom	4	4	4	4	4	4
Critical value	0.711	0.711	0.711	0.711	0.711	0.711

The analyst may assume that A001, A002, A006 and SW are written by the same author.

	A001/A002	A001/A003	A001/A004	A001/A005	A001/A006
Chi square	0.04696	19.4906	2.6193	1.3421	0.1425
Degree of freedom	4	4	4	4	4
Critical value	0.711	0.711	0.711	0.711	0.711

	A002/A003	A002/A004	A002/A005	A002/A006
Chi square	18.0993	1.9833	1.1406	0.2411
Degree of freedom	4	4	4	4
Critical value	0.711	0.711	0.711	0.711

An analyst can assume that the author of A002, A004, A005 and A006 is the same.

	A003/A004	A003/A005	A003/A006
Chi square	9.6379	11.8597	19.4136
Degree of freedom	4	4	4
Critical value	0.711	0.711	0.711

	A004/A005	A004/ A006
Chi square	1.5044	3.0638
Degree of freedom	4	4
Critical value	0.711	0.711

	A005/A006
Chi square	1.3274
Degree of freedom	4
Critical value	0.711

## 6. Conclusion

In this paper, the analysis of different empirical testing methods used for author profiling is done. In total five empirical testing methods were used, out of which three methods worked appropriately and two methods did not work to find out the real author of the text. The other methods may work with more data as for present research data was limited. In these methods, I found intra-author variation. There are a few general observations related to intra-author variation.

1. Variation is seen in all authors.
2. The reasons for variation could be genre, category of the text, time, and circumstances in which the author wrote it.
3. Short texts can show maximum variation making them unfit for different types of measurement.
4. It is observed that short texts have intra-author variation due to constancy issues. It adds difficulty when unknown text is compared in a forensic setting. Forensic writings are short and show limited aspects of human behavior. Although there are many short texts by one writer showing similar features, there is no guarantee that these are not accidental.

Language-based author identification technique	Discrimination accuracy	Discrimination error rate	Assign AOO2 to SW?
Vocabulary richness measurement	72%	28%	Yes

Stylometric method	70%	30%	Yes
Punctuation mark frequencies	85%	15%	Yes
Hapax Legomena of authors	52.38%	47.62%	No
Readability	50%	50%	No

**Table 9:** Result of empirical testing methods

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## Is it difficult to understand relative clauses in English? A Study of Indian ESL Learners

Satuluri Sahana<sup>1</sup> & Lina Mukhopadhyay<sup>1</sup>

*English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad*

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### ABSTRACT

Learning advanced syntactic properties such as relative clauses in a second language like English poses challenges for young ESL learners as they have to rely on the instructional context and teacher oral feedback for exposure in the target language. To understand whether relative clauses (RC) when presented in declarative sentences and wh-questions pose processing difficulties for young ESL learners, a study was conducted on a group of seventy-six Telugu learners of English enrolled in grades seven and nine. They were tested on their ability to judge the grammaticality of declarative sentences and wh-questions with relative clauses situated at subject and object positions respectively. The findings show that due to processing constraints, the learners comprehend the wh-question embedded relative clauses in the subject position with significantly less accuracy than those in the object position. Consequently, they have significantly higher difficulty in accepting the former's grammaticality over rejecting ungrammatical structures whereas, in the case of object position wh-question embedded relative clauses, their grammaticality acceptance is significantly higher than the rejection of ungrammatical counterparts. The paper concludes by drawing pedagogical implications of teaching complex structures such as relative clauses to young ESL learners in a task-based approach.

## 1. Introduction

First language acquisition is a fascinating process as it throws light upon the learning mechanisms that children employ to comprehend complex syntactic structures. Their comprehension is based on the linguistic input they receive during their early years at home. Language acquisition research suggests that the successful acquisition of a target language is incumbent upon the quality and quantity of comprehensible input (Krashen 1989, p.441) and its use in communication (Ellis & He, 1999). However, learning an additional language in the instructional context poses challenges, especially when complex syntactic structures with multiple clauses are involved. A structure that has attracted a lot of research interest currently is the comprehension of relative clauses (RC) in declarative and wh-question sentences concerning the extraction site. While one body of research suggests that learners find it easy to comprehend when the relative clauses occur in the subject position (Abdolmanafi & Rahmani, 2012; Izumi, 2003; Juffs & Harrington, 1995; Vasisht et.al 2013), another body of research suggests that the learners face difficulties in comprehending relative clauses when they occur in the subject

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Authors: [satuluriphdele20@efluniversity.ac.in](mailto:satuluriphdele20@efluniversity.ac.in) & [linamukhopadhyay@efluniversity.ac.in](mailto:linamukhopadhyay@efluniversity.ac.in)

position (Schacter, 1989; Schacter & Yipp, 1990, Tsimpli & Dimitrakopoulou, 2007; White & Juffs, 1998). Before we discuss previous research findings on learning relativisation in English and the processing difficulty it entails, let us briefly look into the linguistic features involved in comprehending relative clauses.

### 1.1 Relativisation in complex *wh*-questions

A relative clause is that part of the sentence which acts as a noun modifier by providing extra information related to it. For instance, sentences 1 and 2 contain RCs, indicated in italics:

1. Geetha decided to buy a long dress *that was green in colour*. (modifies NP, a long dress)
- 2a. Ravi said that [he watched an old Hindi movie *[which starred SRK]*]. (modifies NP, an old Hindi movie)
- 2b. Which movie did Ravi say that he watched?

A relative clause cannot be considered an argument by itself, unlike a complementary clause which qualifies as a complete notional sentence selected by a noun, verb or adjective (such as, *he watched an old Hindi movie which starred SRK*).

Through the use of RCs, a language user tries to pack in more information about noun phrases in a sentence in a compact manner. Comprehending such complex clauses may give rise to processing problems and increase the reading load in texts that contain multiple RCs. For instance, let us look at sentence (3) taken from chapter IV of grade VII from The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)<sup>2</sup> English textbook (p.55-56) used in Indian schools.

3. [[Every day the dog<sub>(sub-NP1)</sub> followed him<sub>(NP2)</sub> to work<sub>(NP3)</sub>], [never once harming the white heron<sub>(NP4)</sub> [that walked in the footsteps of the old man<sub>(obj-NP5)</sub>]] [to pick up the worms<sub>(NP6)</sub>]].

The sentence includes multiple idea units connected to the subject noun phrase (NP<sub>1</sub>: The dog). A young reader might experience difficulty in comprehension as two or more successive idea units have to be processed simultaneously while maintaining coherence amongst the multiple parts in the sentence. So the reader while utilizing the first idea unit, the dog's action, has to comprehend the second or the action of the white heron. For example, to comprehend sentence (3) successfully, the learner must be able to identify the relationship between NP<sub>2</sub>, *the old man* and NP<sub>5</sub>, which are located in two different idea units and arrive at the central meaning of the sentence that both *the dog* and *the white heron* followed *the old man to work, every day*. Relative clauses can be of two types: restrictive and nonrestrictive. A restrictive or defining relative clause is embedded directly in the NP providing essential information related to it. When such a relative clause is taken out from the main clause, the sentence does not make much sense, as in sentence (4a).

- 4a. Sunny<sub>(NP1)</sub> said he<sub>(NP1)</sub> likes those paintings<sub>(NP2)</sub> [*that are very colourful and bright*].

The two idea units, (*Sunny said that he likes paintings*) and (particularly, *very colourful and bright paintings*), in this sentence are combined with the help of a pronominal NP, co-referenced with the lexical NP at the subject position of the main clause. This pronominal use

<sup>2</sup> The NCERT, established by the Indian government in 1961, is an independent body that provides guidance, recommendations regarding policies and educational material such as textbooks and workbooks to enhance the quality of primary and secondary education in the country.

is also referred to as ‘the resumptive pronoun’ which binds the relative clause to the main clause. In contrast, a non-restrictive or non-defining clause (4b) provides extra information about the word it is related to and does not bring much difference to the sentence if taken out.

4b. The cheese, [*which the rat ate*], was rotten.

When RCs occur in wh-questions, the embedding can be done in either the subject (5a,5b) or the object (6a, 6b) positions. For instance,

5a. Neha said *that Anu ate the apple*. [subj of RC]

5b. Who did Neha say ate the apple?

6a. I said that Mary sent *a brown parcel of books* yesterday. [obj of RC]

6b. Which parcel did you say that Mary sent yesterday?

### *1.2 Learning Relative Clause in English and Perceptual Difficulty Hypothesis*

The Perceptual Difficulty Hypothesis (PDH) proposed by Kuno (1974), predicts that in S-V-O sentences, regardless of the type of relative clause, sentences with RCs embedded in the matrix subject position are more difficult to process than those embedded in the object position, due to short term memory limitations (Izumi, 2003 p. 289), meaning that the difficulty of processing a sentence is higher when the subordination is done at the subject’s position of the sentence. In the subject relative clauses, the main clause is often separated from the subject by a long subordinate clause, which can make it challenging for the reader or listener to keep track of the main point of the sentence. For instance,

7. The topic the teacher explained in class yesterday, which I found confusing at first, with some research and review of the notes became clearer to me.

In sentence (7), the main idea unit (the topic became clearer to me) is separated from the subject NP (the topic) by a long subordinate clause (the teacher explained in class yesterday, which I found confusing at first, with some research and review of the notes). This kind of subordination can make it difficult for the reader or listener to keep track of the main point of the sentence and may require additional cognitive effort to parse.

8. The topic teacher explained yesterday, which was confusing at first, became clearer to me with some research and a review of the notes.

But, in sentence (8), the main idea unit (the topic became clearer to me) being separated by short subordinate clauses (the teacher explained yesterday, which was confusing at first) are much easier in processing and understand the sentence, as the cognitive resources required to hold and integrate the information does not exceed the available capacity.

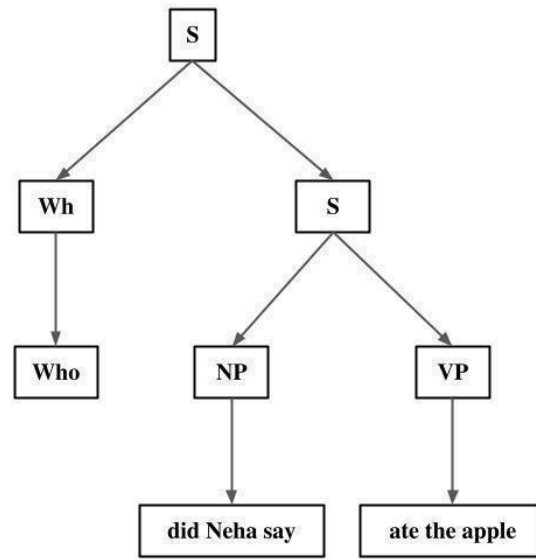
Additionally, when subordination is done at the subject position, there may be ambiguity or multiple interpretations of the sentence, which can further complicate processing. As a result, sentences with subordination at the subject position may require more cognitive effort to understand and may be more prone to misinterpretation.

### *1.3 Evidence from research on learning Relativisation*

After examining how relative clauses are processed by ESL/EFL learners in the previous section, we now shift our attention to reviewing previous research conducted in this specific area. As discussed previously, PDH hints at comprehension difficulties that learners might experience in understanding a sentence when it is embedded with a relative clause at the subject position. In addition to this, extensive research shows that when compared to native speakers, ESL/EFL learners find subject-extraction sentences more difficult than object extraction. For instance, Schacter & Yipp (1990) experimented (as an extended study to Schacter, 1989), that compared native and non-native speakers' judgements of relative clauses (without 'that') in wh-questions occurring in subject and object positions. Sixty undergraduate learners, divided into three groups based on their first language i.e, English (n=20), Chinese (n=20) and Korean (n=20), were asked to respond to a questionnaire with fifty-four sentences (36 - two, three and four clausal level sentences + 18 distractors) following a four-point Likert scale: a-clearly grammatical; b-probably grammatical; c-probably ungrammatical; and d-clearly ungrammatical. They compared the performance of three groups and observed that the findings suggested a subject-object asymmetry.

Later, White and Juffs (1998) conducted a study, primarily to investigate whether adult learners, with Chinese L1 backgrounds and similar target language proficiency, unconsciously demonstrate evidence of UG principles and if direct exposure to the target language impacts language acquisition success. The study included two participant groups: Group 1 (n=16,  $M_{age}=22.8$ ), who had no travel experience but had contact with native speakers after the age of 17, and Group 2 (n=16,  $M_{age}=32.25$ ), who had lived in Canada for an average of 4.1 years at the time of testing. Both participant groups, along with two control groups, completed two tasks: a grammaticality judgement test and a question formation test. The grammaticality judgement test comprised sixty sentences (with a 50% split between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences) involving extractions from various sentence positions such as noun complements, RCs, adjuncts, subjects and objects. The results from the test indicated a discrepancy in the performance of subject and object extraction in certain grammatical sentences.

More recently, Tsimpli & Dimitrakopoulou, in their study (2007), tested the degree of acceptability of resumptive pronouns in embedded interrogatives and its possible effect causing conditions such as L1 and L2 differences, extraction site and interpretable features of animacy and d - linking. This study involved forty-eight adult Greek learners of English, divided into an intermediate group (n=21) and an advanced group (n=27), along with twenty-six adult native speakers. Participants were asked to complete a bimodal (reading and listening) paced grammaticality judgement task, rating fifty-one sentences (including 21 distractors) on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from certainly ungrammatical to certainly grammatical. They found that both the intermediate and advanced groups performed significantly less than the native speaker group, however, the advanced group reportedly showed a much more target-like performance. The present study was also conducted believing that the Indian ESL learners, due to reasons like differences in first and target languages, exposure to the target language, language proficiency and various processing difficulties, might experience challenges in processing relative clauses in the subject position.



**Figure 1.** Tree diagram showing the complex hierarchical structure of the sentence

The difficulties in subject extraction can be explained by the underlying competence of the target language and processing factors involved in comprehending the extracted NP of the RC embedded in a wh-structure (Sahana, 2021). Let us again look at sentence 5b. In the case of this sentence, the words are combined into a question (marked by the interrogative pronoun "who"), with a main clause ("Neha did say") and a subordinate clause ("someone ate the apple"). This step involves constructing a parse tree that represents the hierarchical structure of the sentence (as mentioned in Figure 1).

When a relative clause is placed at the beginning of a sentence, it might cause processing delay and ambiguity to young learners as the meaning will be understood only after the completion of the main clause. The cognitive load increases even more when the anaphoric relationship between the relative pronoun and antecedent is long. For instance, let us look at sentence (9):

9. Who<sub>(NP1)</sub> did you say, despite having varying levels of experience<sub>(NP2)</sub> and facing tough competition from other schools<sub>(NP3)</sub>, won the first prize<sub>(NP4)</sub>?

The reader must hold the extra information (*despite having varying levels of experience(NP2) and facing tough competition from other schools*) provided between NP1 and NP4 in memory until the main clause (*who won the first prize*) is completed to completely understand the sentence. This can create a processing delay and increase cognitive load, particularly for young learners who are still developing their ability to comprehend complex sentence structures.

Furthermore, according to Dependency Locality Theory (Gibson, 2000), the processing difficulty of a sentence is influenced by the length and complexity of the dependencies between words as well as the distance between the dependent and its governor. For instance, let us look at

sentence (10) below. It has five idea units and to successfully understand the sentence, the reader must be able to retain information from all the separate idea units and create a mental representation of the link between the antecedent (*one*) and the governor (*the book*).

10. [The book]<sub>(NP1)</sub> which was written by John, who studied at Harvard University, where he received a degree in English Literature has become the best-selling one<sub>(NP1)</sub> in the industry.

Indian ESL learners often encounter such sentences in their learning material. For instance, if we look at sentences (11) and (12), which are examples of wh-structures with RC in object positions, and (13) which is an example of wh-structures with RC in subject positions taken from NCERT textbooks of grades VII and IX used in Indian schools.

11. What is the secret *that Meena shares with Mridu in the backyard*? (Ch-II, VII grade, p.22)
12. What characteristics does he say *he inherited from his parents*? (Ch-VI, IX grade, p.75)
13. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, whose projects in space, defence and nuclear technology guided India into the twenty-first century, became our eleventh President in 2002. (Ch-VI, IX grade, p.68)

## 2. Research Objectives

Building upon the preceding discussion, the paper sets out to investigate the pivotal role of understanding relativisation in both declarative sentences and wh-questions as a fundamental determinant influencing the successful comprehension of expository and argumentative texts in language and subject classes. Notably, a gap in the literature exists concerning the comprehension levels of Indian English as a Second Language (ESL) learners when confronted with sentences containing relative clauses at the subject/object positions—an aspect that has remained unexplored. Addressing this gap, our study aims to assess whether Indian ESL learners encounter challenges in processing and comprehending the connections between idea units within such clauses. This research endeavours to ascertain whether the acquisition of relative clauses in different sentence positions (declarative versus questions) aligns with patterns observed in the first language (L1) learning path and is governed by Universal Grammar principles, as proposed by White and Juffs (1998).

## 3. The Study

A study was conducted on Indian ESL learners with Telugu as L1 to understand the level of knowledge with respect to relativized structures so that the comprehension success of young ESL learners could be predicted. The study attempted to find answers to the following research questions:

- RQ1. *Can young ESL learners comprehend relative clauses in declarative sentences better than wh-questions?*
- RQ2. *Is the processing of relative clauses influenced by (i) the proficiency of the learners and (ii) the position of the embedded relative clause in wh-questions?*



### 3.1 Participants

Seventy-six learners enrolled in grades VII (n=33; f=16, m=17; age range: 12-13) and IX (n=43; f=20, m=23; age range: 14-15) in an English medium school, following the CBSE curriculum<sup>3</sup>, participated in the study. The learners were found to get fairly good quality exposure to the target language through input within the school from teachers, textbooks (National Council of Educational Research and Training, NCERT) they follow according to their curriculum, and libraries. Teacher instructions play a major role in introducing the spoken language to the participants. Based on classroom observations, the medium of instruction for the participants was found to be a combination of English (75%) and Telugu (25%).

### 3.2 Task used

A grammaticality judgement task was used to assess learners' ability to recognize and differentiate between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences in declarative and wh-questions with relative clauses. Grammaticality judgment tasks provide a controlled and systematic way to investigate individuals' syntactic competence and their ability to recognize and evaluate the grammaticality of sentences. They seek a probabilistic perspective rather than a definitive answer to the question, 'Is x well-formed?' (Rimmer, 2006) therefore are considered to be an appropriate task to measure receptive knowledge. It also allows researchers to explore the underlying mechanisms of language processing, acquisition, and variation.

The task used in the current study involved presenting participants with declarative and wh- questions and asking them to judge whether the sentences are grammatically correct or not according to the syntactic rules of the target language. Previous research shows that the timed Grammaticality judgment tasks primarily assess implicit knowledge, while ungrammatical items on untimed ones measure explicit knowledge (Godfroid et al., 2015). Implicit knowledge refers to the intuitive understanding of grammar that is acquired through exposure to a language, whereas explicit knowledge involves consciously learned rules and explicit awareness of grammatical structures. Therefore, it can be said that, by analyzing how learners make judgments about the grammaticality of sentences, researchers can gain insight into the mental representations of grammar that language users have and can further try to understand the interface between knowledge representation and processing.

Grammaticality judgment tasks also provide a way to assess learners' grammatical competence in the target language structures, which can be essential for grammar teaching and learning. Schachter & Yip (1990) hint at the complex interaction between the participants' competence and performing variables. For instance, extra grammatical factors such as language processing constraints and preference towards a few varieties of grammatical structures. The present study also tries to look at processing constraints the learners might experience in comprehending relative clauses at the subject position in wh-questions and a preference towards the grammaticality of the sentences used.

Through grammaticality judgement tasks as diagnostic tests, teachers and researchers can also identify areas of difficulty in grammar acquisition, track learners' progress over time, and develop appropriate teaching materials and strategies to improve their grammatical competence.

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<sup>3</sup> The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum is a comprehensive educational framework implemented in India, primarily for students in the central government-affiliated schools.

Therefore, in our study, we used a grammaticality judgment task with twenty-two sentences (examples retrieved from Sahana, 2021), divided into three categories. Table 1 provides information about the categories used in the present study with examples.

Category	Status	Examples
OBJECT extraction of the relative clause (4+4 sentences)	GR*	1. Which dress did Geetha decide that she will buy? 2. Which movie did Ravi say that he watched?
	UGR**	3. *Who did you think that Reshma would like him? 4. *Which car did you say that you wanted to test drive it?
SUBJECT extraction of the relative clause (4+4 sentences)	GR	5. Which animal did the television announce ran away from the zoo? 6. What did the teacher suggest should be announced at the meeting?
	UGR	7. *Which book do you remember that it was full of pictures? 8. *What do people think that it makes Hindi cinema popular?
Relativized and small clauses (6 sentences)	GR	9. The boy said that he wanted to go to the zoo. 10. The girl wanted to get home early today.

\*Grammatical \*\*Ungrammatical

**Table 1. Task design**

A total of twenty-two contextualized<sup>4</sup> sentences were used in the study, which were designed to be easily understandable for the learners, enabling them to grasp the underlying concepts conveyed in the sentences. This approach was considered to ensure that the participants could comprehend the meaning and context of the sentences without encountering any kind of unnecessary difficulties or confusion. Sixteen out of twenty-two sentences are wh-questions with RC at subject/object positions, four declarative sentences with embedded RC and two filler sentences. Among the sixteen wh-questions, eight sentences had RC located in the subject position (four grammatical, four ungrammatical) and the rest eight had RC located in the object position (four grammatical, four ungrammatical). All the ungrammatical sentences were created by retaining the resumptive pronoun in situ even while using the extracted relative clause (e.g., items 4,7,8 in Table 1), which was against one of the principle rules of subordination.

<sup>4</sup> The presented items were carefully designed in a manner to incorporate familiar concepts to Indian learners of that age. This approach helped learners understand the purpose and relevance of the test items, allowing them to apply their knowledge and skills in authentic ways.

### 3.3 Task administration and scoring pattern

The task was administered to both the groups in grades VII and IX separately in two different sessions but on the same day. All the participants of each group were taken to a silent classroom setting and were provided with a task sheet containing the sentences in a randomised order. They were asked to judge the grammaticality of the sentences in 40 minutes by ticking against the option ‘grammatical’ or ‘ungrammatical’ provided next to each sentence. A score of [+1] was awarded if the grammatical sentences were accepted or [0] otherwise, and a score of [-1] was awarded if the ungrammatical sentences were rejected or [0] otherwise. Note that for ease of comparing knowledge across three different structures, we attempted a percentage analysis and used this as a base for inferential statistical tests in the study as reported in the following section.

## 4. Findings

*RQ1. Can young ESL learners comprehend relative clauses in declarative sentences better than wh-questions?*

For RQ 1 we considered the performance of both grades together. The performance of all the seventy-six learners suggests that they can comprehend RC with an overall accuracy of 51.68% ( $SD = 2.37$ ). Their knowledge of RC when embedded in declarative sentences was higher ( $M = 57.24\%$ ,  $SD = 18.12$ ) than the knowledge of RC embedded in complex wh-questions ( $M = 49.59\%$ ,  $SD = 1.85$ ). As the group performance was found to be normally distributed (kurtosis:  $wh\text{-ques}=0.03$ ;  $dec=-0.34$ ), a one-tailed paired t-test was used to find out whether the difference in performance between both conditions was significantly different. The t-test results revealed that the difference in this knowledge representation is statistically significant ( $t(127)=3.10^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.00$ ) and proves the first RQ to be true, that comprehending RC in declarative sentences is significantly higher than in wh-questions.

*RQ2. Is the processing of relative clauses influenced by (i) the proficiency of the learners and (ii) the position of the embedded relative clause in wh-questions?*

To understand the performance based on the proficiency level, the participants were regrouped based on their z-score values into High Proficiency (HP) ( $n=29$ ; z-score = 2.86 to 0.60) and Average Proficiency (AP) ( $n=47$ ; z-score = 0.05 to -2.21). This helped us examine if the difference in performance at two different proficiency levels is significant. The descriptive performance of the 2 groups with t-test values is presented in Table 2 below.

	High Proficiency	Average Proficiency	T-test	p-value
<b>Declarative RC</b>	60.53% (0.68)	57.45% (1.04)	2.65*	0.01
<b>Object-RC</b>	70.69% (1.17)	50.80% (1.11)	5.22*	0.00
<b>Subject RC</b>	51.29% (1.08)	34.04% (0.99)	5.58*	0.00
<b>Overall (wh-questions)</b>	61.21% (1.08)	42.29% (1.15)	11.26*	0.00

**Table 2.** Group-wise performances on declarative sentences & wh-questions

The following conclusions can be drawn from Table 2:

i) The HP group can comprehend declarative sentences with relative clauses ( $M = 61.21\%$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ) and relative clauses with wh-questions ( $M = 61.21\%$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ) better than the AP group in both declarative ( $M = 57.45\%$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ) and wh-question ( $M = 42.29$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ) sentences respectively. A paired one-tailed t-test analysis revealed that in comprehending declarative sentences HP group performed significantly higher than the AP group ( $t(65)=2.65^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.01$ ). A similar t-test analysis also confirmed that the difference between the processing ability of wh-questions ( $t(74)=11.26^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.00$ ) was statistically higher in the HP group over the AP group. From this finding, we conclude that proficiency levels have an impact on comprehending RCs when presented in declarative and wh-question sentences or that the first part of RQ2 is true.

Now we look at the comprehension challenges in RCs in wh-questions in two different positions in the following findings:

ii) When the groups were compared to understand the comprehension ability of wh-questions with relatives clauses occurring at object position, it was found that the HP group performed better ( $M = 70.69\%$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ) than the AP group ( $M = 50.80\%$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ), and the difference was found to be statistically significant ( $t(78) = 5.22^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ).

iii) Likewise when the groups were compared to understand the comprehension ability of wh-questions with relatives clauses occurring at object position, it was found that the HP group performed better ( $M = 51.29\%$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ) than the AP group ( $M = 34.04\%$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ), and this difference was also found to be statistically significant ( $t(78) = 5.58^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.00$ ).

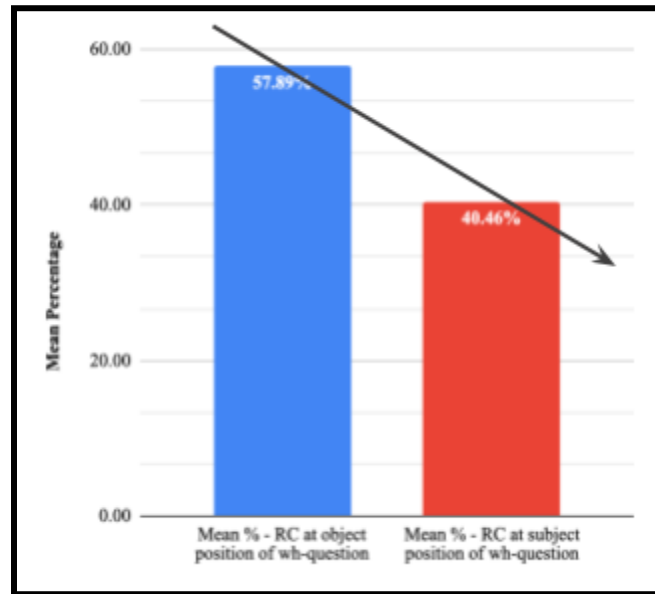
Furthermore, a one-way factorial ANOVA analysis (1 X 3) of the three conditions, i.e comprehension of RC in declarative sentences, in the object position of wh- questions and in the subject position of wh-question within the two groups revealed that the difference was statistically significant in both HP group ( $F(2,84)=10.88^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.00$ ) and AP group ( $F(2,138)=22.54^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.00$ ). A Tukey's post hoc HSD test revealed the following results as presented in Table 3:

Comparison between the extraction site	Sample Mean Difference ( $p\leq 0.05$ )	
	HP	AP
Subject – Object	18.53*	16.76*
Declarative – Object	5.60 (n.s)	2.39 (n.s)
Declarative – Subject	12.93*	19.15*

**Table 3.** Within-group comparisons on Tukey's Post Hoc HSD results for three extraction site conditions

As represented in Table 3, the performance difference between the subject v/s object and declarative v/s subject conditions is significant ( $p\leq 0.05^*$ ) for both the HP and AP groups while

the difference was found to be not significant for declarative v/s object condition for both the HP



and AP groups.

**Figure 2.** Mean performance of RC at object position versus subject position in wh-questions

Figure 2, representing the learner's knowledge of comprehending RCs in wh-questions shows that there is a 17.43% difference in the accuracy of comprehending relative clauses when located in the object position than in the subject position, which is also statistically significant ( $t(150)=6.56^*$ ,  $p \leq 0.00$ ). This observation along with the findings in Tables 2 and 3 validates the second part of RQ2 in that the knowledge of relative clauses is influenced by the position of RC from which it is extracted.

Overall, the findings from Tables 2, 3 and Figure 2 prove RQ 2 to be true that knowledge of relative clauses is dually impacted by learners' proficiency levels and the position of occurrence and extraction of RCs.

*How did learners respond to the grammaticality of sentences in object and subject positions?*

We were also interested in finding out how the learners responded to grammatical versus ungrammatical sentences as the syntax acquisition research shows a tendency for accepting grammatical sentences over rejecting ungrammatical sentences (Tsimpli & Dimitrakopoulou, 2007).

In Table 4, we present the descriptive statistics of grammatical bias in both groups across two positions of RC in wh-questions:

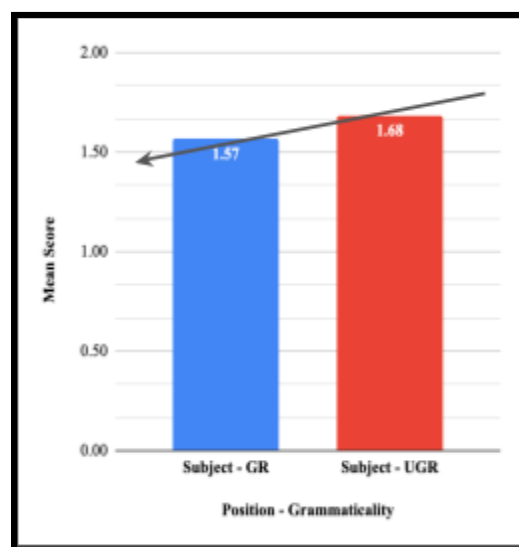
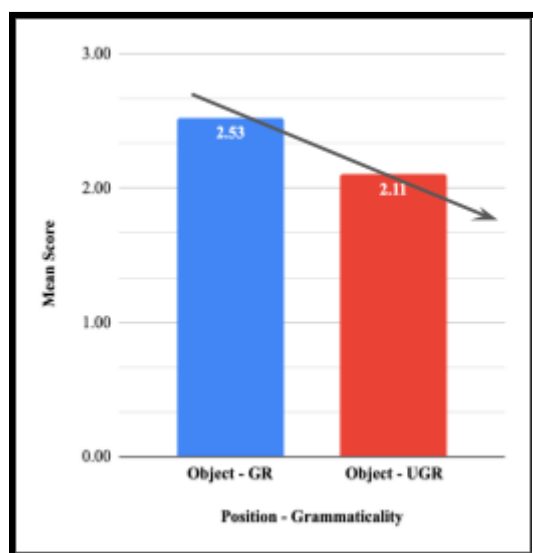
Position of RC in wh-question	High Proficiency		Average proficiency	
	Grammatical sentences	Ungrammatical sentences	Grammatical sentences	Ungrammatical sentences

<b>Object</b>	3.07 (0.92)	2.48 (0.91)	2.19 (0.82)	1.87 (0.97)
<b>Subject</b>	1.97 (0.91)	2.14 ((1.03)	1.32 (0.96)	1.40 (0.83)

**Table 4.** Group-wise percentages of mean and SD: representation of grammatical bias

Specifically, it was observed that the learners showed a significantly stronger bias towards accepting grammatical sentences over rejecting ungrammatical sentences when RC occurs in the object position within each group. The grammaticality bias is seen to be significantly higher in the HP group ( $t(56)=2.43^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.02$ ) but not statistically significant in the AP group ( $t(56)=-0.67$ ,  $p\leq 0.50$ , n.s). Interestingly in the second condition, when RC occurs in the subject position, the bias shifts towards rejecting ungrammatical sentences over accepting grammatical sentences, though the dither of the groups: HP ( $t(56)=-0.67$ ,  $p\leq 0.50$ , n.s) and AP ( $t(92)=-0.46$ ,  $p\leq 0.65$ , n.s).

Lastly, both groups were merged to understand the overall bias with respect to the position of the relative clause. A paired one-tailed t-test revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the acceptance of grammatical sentences when RC occurs in the subject position ( $M = 1.57$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ) versus object position ( $M = 2.52$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ) ( $t(150)=6.09^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.00$ ). Interestingly, the learners showed a bias towards accepting the grammatical sentences when the RC occurs in the object position over rejecting ungrammatical sentences and this was statistically significant ( $t(150)=2.67^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.00$ ). It was also observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the rejection of ungrammatical sentences when occurred in the subject position ( $M = 1.68$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ) versus object position ( $M = 2.11$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ) ( $t(150)=2.65^*$ ,  $p\leq 0.01$ ). Contrary to the first condition, the learners showed a bias towards rejecting the ungrammatical sentences over accepting the grammatical sentences when the RC occurs in the subject position, though it was not statistically significant ( $t(150)=0.75$ ,  $p\leq 0.23$ , n.s). In Figures 3a and 3b, we present the trends observed in the grammaticality bias of the two groups of learners.



*Figures 3a and 3b.*

**Comparison of means:** Grammatical v/s Ungrammatical in object and subject conditions

Overall, Figure 3a clearly illustrates that the learners have a higher grammatical bias as they accept grammatical sentences at a higher rate than reject ungrammatical utterances of RC in wh-questions when it occurs in the object position. But, Figure 3b shows that when the RC occurs in the subject position, the rejection rate of ungrammatical sentences is higher than accepting grammatical sentences.

In sum, we found that when RC occurs in the object position learners' rate of accepting grammatical sentences is significantly higher in contrast to when RC occurs in the subject position, where rejecting ungrammatical sentences was done more accurately. This trend is corroborated by the findings in the study conducted by Tsimpli & Dimitrakopoulou (2007) on adult Greek learners of English where they found insignificant results as the intermediate and advanced learner groups accept the grammatical wh-questions higher when resumptive pronoun (RP) occurred in object position while when RP occurred in subject position, they tend to reject ungrammatical sentences higher over accepting the grammatical sentences. Such subject-object asymmetry was also observed by (Schachter and Yip, 1990; White and Juffs, 1998). However, a deeper look into the phenomenon is required to specifically state the reason for this subject-object asymmetry.

## 5. Discussion

From the first finding based on the overall performance of both the groups, it becomes clear that comprehending RC in declarative sentences is significantly higher than in wh-questions and this could be explained owing to processing and extraction difficulties based on the sentence structure (Gibson, 2000). Furthermore, the second trend revealed in Table 2 that the HP group performs better on comprehending relative clauses embedded in declarative sentences and wh-questions can be explained with the fact that with growth in proficiency, comprehension of RCs improves and with time the HP group could have a higher frequency of exposure and noticed the structures better over the AP group (Izumi & Izumi 2004).

The third trend from the results yielded from this study suggests a significant difference between the comprehension ability of relative clauses when occurring in declarative versus wh-questions and more specifically in subject versus object position of wh-questions and also in grammaticality bias of the RC sentences. All these trends were observed in the findings presented in Tables 2, 3 4, and Figures 2, 3a and 3b. The higher accuracy of performance on declarative sentences than wh-questions (object > subject) could be explained due to processing constraints (Kuno, 1970). The processing complexity is further validated from the fourth trend that most of the learners judged the wh-subject extraction sentences as being ungrammatical and conversely found accepting such sentences to be very difficult. As discussed in the previous sections, research on relativization has well established the asymmetry in extraction from object versus subject positions. For instance, Schachter and Yip (1990) in their study conducted on native v/s non-native learners found a significant difference in the acceptability rate of the object vs. subject wh-extraction, favouring the object extraction. This asymmetry was explained on account of processing difficulties involved in subject extraction and the garden path effect. White and Juffs (1998) also observed a comparable imbalance between subject and object acceptability rate of wh-questions with a missing complementizer and in the time taken to react to grammatically correct sentences. They suggested that the disparity they observed may be attributed to difficulties in processing rather than a deficiency in syntax, given that the learners were capable of rejecting sentences that contained errors. Similar results were found By Tsimpli

and Dimitrakopoulou (2007) in a study conducted to understand the degree of acceptability of resumptive pronouns in embedded interrogatives. The intermediate group in their study performed significantly lower in both grammatical and ungrammatical sentences in the subject RC condition when compared to the object RC condition. They perceived this asymmetry in the performance from a syntactic view rather than a processing perspective.

It has been seen in previous research (Gaies, 1980; Hunt, 1965; O'Donnell, 1976) that the syntactic complexity of learners' language can be assessed/estimated by measures of mean length of T-Units or mean length of utterances. When the length of the T-Unit increases, as a result of the use of subordination, it hints at the user's higher ability to produce complex language as they are being able to pack in more information in an utterance/sentence. Relativisation, a form of subordination, requires the addition of RC in the subject or object phrase of a sentence which can pose processing difficulties as it demands the inclusion of new ideas within the main clause. But when learners are able to comprehend and/or reject ill-formed RC structures and produce such structures it reveals that they possess a higher level of language proficiency and also predicts their success in reading. Therefore, in the instructional context, the learning of this structure holds a lot of promise for the language teacher. So in the next section, we present ideas for ESL/EFL teachers to help their learners comprehend this structure systematically with a task-based approach.

### *5.1 Teaching Strategies for Relative Clauses*

Apart from the processing difficulties that ESL/EFL learners experience, it was also observed that they avoid using complex linguistic structures that they find difficult due to differences between their native language and the target language (Ellis, 1994) leading to the omission of uncertain L2 constructions. This phenomenon was also observed by many researchers in their studies on relativization (Chiang, 1980; Gass, 1980; Li, 1996; Maniruzzaman, 2008; Phoocharoensil & Simargool, 2010; Schachter, 1974; Zhao, 1989). It is important for ESL teachers to help learners overcome the avoidance, as the learners may lose opportunities to develop several aspects of language proficiency such as effective communication skills, fluency, vocabulary expansion, and cultural understanding. To fully optimize the potential for language learning, it is crucial that the learners not only conquer the obstacles associated with processing difficulties but also overcome the inclination to avoid complex linguistic structures such as relative clauses. Therefore, based on evidence from previous research and the key findings from our study we suggest a few ideas and strategies that ESL teachers could use in middle grades (grades five to ten) to draw learners' attention to the properties of relativisation in English. We implore that with the help of a task-based approach, teachers can urge learners to use such advanced structures meaningfully and with accuracy.

ESL teachers can help learners undergo the processing phase by training them to break complex sentences into simpler chunks (clauses with unique idea units) and to look at sentences as a combination of different idea units with 'verbs' as the pivot of each idea unit. For instance, sentences 14a and 14b, with two separate idea units can be expressed as 14c with an RC inserted in the object phrase.

14a. John said someone met Priya.

14b. Anu met Priya, who was sad.

14c. John said that Anu met Priya, who was sad.



Thereafter, the subject of RC can be reordered to frame a wh-question like 14d.

14d. Who did John say met Priya?

Children can be made aware that the two idea units have two verbs *said*, *met* and each idea unit has an agent namely John and Anu. Once the learners are able to identify the rule of the relative clause (specifically the wh-phrase in 13d), they will be able to overcome the processing challenges associated with understanding the sentence and can effectively comprehend the sentence without difficulty. This mechanism of ‘noticing’ can be taught through a series of increasingly complex tasks as proposed in the theory of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) by N.S Prabhu (1987) in the Bangalore project and later expanded by Robinson (2011, 2021). This will help the young ESL learners to notice the complexity of the structures of the sentences and understand various texts in their textbooks of other subjects along with English.

Teachers can also analyze text complexity to identify advanced syntactic structures present in a text by using online tools such as Text Inspector<sup>5</sup> and CEFR Analyzer<sup>6</sup>. Both the tools can help teachers to identify the level of each word in the text and assign the text a complexity level. The CEFR analyzer classifies texts that contain relative clauses as being at a B1 level or higher as shown through a text (retrieved from the grade IX NCERT English textbook, beehive, chapter 6, p.68, 1-2 paragraphs, see Appendix I) analysis in Table 5 below. The analysis shows the estimated text level and provides the readability scale of the text through Automated Readability Index (ARI)<sup>7</sup> Verbs per sentence, Average of difficult words B level content words against A-level content words, and suggestions related to the scores of the target text and how to manipulate it.

CEFR Level	Automated Readability Index (ARI)	Verbs per sentence	Average of difficult words	B-level content words against A-level content words
A1	5.73	1.49	1.31	0.08
A2	7.03	1.82	1.41	0.12
B1	10	2.37	1.57	0.18
B2	12.33	2.88	1.71	0.26
Input	9.45	2.4	1.72	0.26
<b>Estimated level</b>	<b>B1.1</b>	<b>B1.2</b>	<b>B2.2</b>	<b>B2.2</b>

**Mode: Reading; Estimated Text Level: B2.1**

*Table 5. Example analysis of a short text from NCERT grade IX English textbook*

<sup>5</sup> [www.textinspector.com](http://www.textinspector.com)

<sup>6</sup> <https://cvla.langedu.jp/>

<sup>7</sup> An English text readability test, designed to estimate the appropriate level of text for the learners to understand it (representing the US grade scale approximately)

ESL teachers can utilize the insights gained from analyzing text complexity using the CEFR analyzer as presented in Table 5 to identify and incorporate relevant structures into their supplementary teaching materials. Such analysis would allow teachers to tailor their materials and tweak them to the appropriate level of difficulty for their learners, enhancing the learning experience in the classroom.

Apart from analysing texts for their syntactic complexity, we suggest that ESL/EFL teachers plan their lessons in such a way that they contain a blend of comprehension and production tasks focused on the target syntactic structures i.e. declarative sentences and wh-questions with relativisation in a contextualised manner. For instance, Table 6 has a guided-writing task to help teachers plan their lessons. Picture-based communicative tasks can also be used to induce more interest/participation from the learners. Such tasks can help learners draw links between multiple nominal phrases within a sentence, consequently leading to successful comprehension through coherence between multiple idea units of a sentence.

Task 1	Task 2	Task 3
<p><b>Read the sentence and choose the most suitable option, a or b.</b></p> <p>1. My sister, who works as a nurse, is a great dancer. a) I have one sister. b) I have more than one sister.</p> <p>2. The students who tested positive for COVID-19 were granted leave. a) All the students tested positive for covid. b) Some students did not test positive for COVID-19</p>	<p><b>Join the sentences a and b to form a single sentence using pronouns like- which, when, who etc.</b></p> <p>a. Flat-screen televisions are expensive. b. They have better image quality. <u>Flatscreen televisions which are expensive have better image quality.</u></p> <p>1. a) Ramu is a tall boy. b) He works at a museum. 2. a) The cat slipped from the tree. b) I clicked a picture of it.</p>	<p><b>Complete the sentences given below and write wh-question forms for each. One example is done for you.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> <u>Arjun</u>, who works in Delhi, has recently <u>moved to Hyderabad</u>. <b>wh-question:</b> Where did Arjun, who recently moved to Hyderabad, work?</p> <p>1. ____ is the day in India when ____.</p> <p>2. ____ is the room in my school where ____.</p>

**Table 6.** Example guided-writing task

A free production task can be followed by these fixed to limited writing tasks to help learners reach a higher level of complexity in their use of language. The given below task can be used as an example:

**Task:** Creating a Dialogue with Relative Clauses

**Objective:** To practice using relative clauses.

**Instructions to the teachers:**

1. Divide the whole class into pairs or small groups. Ask the students to create at least five sentences in a conversation form and instruct them to add as many relative clauses as possible in the sentences. After completion, the class can discuss the use of relative clauses in everyday dialogue, and offer feedback and suggestions for improvement.
2. Provide each group with a scenario, such as the following:

**Scenario:** You are at a job interview. Your interviewer is asking you questions about your previous work experience and you/the group of interviewees are answering.

**Example sentence to start the conversation:**

*Interviewer: Can you tell me about a project that you worked on in your previous job?*

## 6. Conclusion

Text complexity in ESL reading can be manipulated by including clausal structures that are advanced like passivization, relativization and other forms of subordination. However, before introducing such structures to the learners, the teachers must make sure that there is a balance between the single and multi-clausal units. In addition, it has also to be taken care that the teachers plan the comprehension process and classroom activities in a well-structured, organized manner in such a way that they become an incrementally cognitively demanding series of tasks. The ideas discussed in the previous section based on the findings of the study, provide a good set of guidelines to reading teachers on how to help ESL learners comprehend sentences with relativisation and apply similar ideas to aid the learning of advanced syntactic structures in English.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) provides a standardized framework for assessing language proficiency. ESL teachers can use the CEFR analyser to determine the language proficiency level of their students and also understand when and how to introduce relative clauses to ESL/EFL learners. They can select texts that contain relative clauses and use tasks (see Table 6) to illustrate how relative clauses function in sentences. Teachers can also provide practice activities, such as fill-in-the-blank exercises or sentence writing tasks, to help students practice using relative clauses. The CEFR analyser can be used to assess students' progress with relative clauses, and teachers can provide feedback to highlight areas of success and areas for improvement.

Using the CEFR analyser to teach relative clauses allows for a targeted approach to language instruction, as teachers can tailor their teaching to the appropriate level of complexity for their students. By introducing relative clauses in a structured and gradual manner, teachers can help students understand and use this important grammatical structure more effectively. By enhancing comprehension and employing advanced linguistic elements like subordination and relativization, learners can be made to enhance their overall language proficiency. The impact of the instructional effect on the acquisition of relativization can be taken up for future research.

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## Appendix 1

### Short text used for CEFR Analysis

1. I was born into a middle-class Tamil family in the island town of Rameswaram in the erstwhile Madras State. My father, Jainulabdeen, had neither much formal education nor much wealth; despite these disadvantages, he possessed great innate wisdom and a true generosity of spirit. He had an ideal helpmate in my mother, Ashiamma. I do not recall the exact number of people she fed every day, but I am quite certain that far more outsiders ate with us than all the members of our own family put together.
2. I was one of many children — a short boy with rather undistinguished looks, born to tall and handsome parents. We lived in our ancestral house, which was built in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was a fairly large pucca house, made of limestone and brick, on Mosque Street in Rameswaram. My austere father used to avoid all inessential comforts and luxuries. However, all necessities were provided for, in terms of food, medicine or clothes. In fact, I would say mine was a very secure childhood, both materially and emotionally.



## The Genitive Case in Goalparia, Assamese, and Bangla

<sup>1</sup>Fahmida Akhter, <sup>2</sup>Basudha Raje, <sup>1</sup>Baishalee Rajkhowa, <sup>3</sup>Amalesh Gope<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Royal Global University, Assam

<sup>2</sup>CIIL, Mysuru

<sup>3</sup>Tezpur University, Assam

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### ABSTRACT

This paper conducts a comparative analysis of the genitive case system in three Eastern-Indo-Aryan languages: Goalparia, Assamese, and Bangla. The primary objective is to investigate the morpho-syntactic properties of genitive case markers, exploring potential differences or similarities among these languages that share close genetic affiliations and exhibit readily visible features. While Assamese adopts a split-ergative case system, Bangla and Goalparia employ a nominative-accusative case system. Our examination focuses on declarative sentences, utilizing the Generative Approach to unveil the inherent structure and distribution of genitive case markers in these languages. The paper presents a syntactic tree illustrating the relationship between the head, D, and the specifiers, DP spec, along with the complement, demonstrating the representation of the genitive case marker across the three languages.

## 1. Introduction

The current case-marking system in linguistic studies has deep historical roots, dating back to the era of Panini, as documented in his canonical text, *Ashtadhyayi*. Throughout history, the quest to elucidate the relationship between the *agent of an action* and the *object* affected by it has led to the establishment of varied syntactic categories in different languages.

Panini's focus on Sanskrit, a language purportedly featuring eight cases, distinct from the six semantic relations he proposed, exemplifies this historical exploration. Similarly, systematic efforts have been dedicated to comprehending a phrase's connection between nouns and verbs. With the verb considered the primary component, it determines the nature and function of the argument essential to completing the action it denotes. However, it is crucial to recognize that the concept of "case" transcends the syntactic structure of a language or the association of arguments with the verb. It also incorporates the semantic relationships between arguments and the function the verb seeks to accomplish through them. In this pursuit, the case must account for the theta role held by each argument to determine the appropriate case assignment.

This paper seeks to examine the morpho-syntactic properties of the genitive case in three Indo-Aryan languages, viz., Goalparia, Assamese, and Bangla, and explore the potential similarities and/or differences in these closely related languages. The subsequent sections of this paper will shed light on the intricate process of genitive case assignment in the context of three Eastern Indo-Aryan languages: Goalparia, Assamese, and Bangla.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [amaleshgope5sept@gmail.com](mailto:amaleshgope5sept@gmail.com)

## 2. Languages Under Study: Goalpariya, Assamese, and Bangla

The Goalpariya (ISO 639-3-!) is an Indo-Aryan language, predominantly spoken in Goalpara, Dhubri, South Salmara-Mankachar, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon and Chirang districts of Assam, India. Beyond its Assamese roots, Goalpariya echoes in regions of southern Meghalaya, northern Bengal, and eastern Bihar within India's borders. Notably, the Goalpariya community is also settled in northern Bhutan and the Jhapa and Morang districts of Nepal. While Datta (1973) asserts Goalpariya as a distinct language, Chowdhury (1992) identifies it as a dialect of Assamese. Grierson (1963) and Kakati (1935) termed it *Rajbanshi*. However, the native speakers refer to it as 'Deshi Bhasha' or 'Deshi Kota,' referring to the local language. The *Census Report of India* (2001) indicates that there are 10 million speakers of Goalpariya. The language shares properties similar to Assamese and Bangla and is often considered a dialect of either language. It follows an SOV word order and is post-positional. Iqbal (2013) proposes seven case markers and claims the language follows a nominative-accusative case system.

The Assamese Language (ISO 639-3-asm), natively referred to as *Axomiya*, [axomija] belongs to the Eastern Indo-Aryan language family with over 15 million native speakers (The Census Report of India: 2011) and is the official language of Assam. The language is highly agglutinating and follows an SOV word order similar to Bangla, exhibiting post-positional properties. Kakati (1941) and Bora (1960) initially proposed a nominative-accusative case system for Assamese with six *karakas* or case markers. Later on, Goswami (1982) claimed that there are seven case markers in this language, while Sarma (2002) argued that Assamese follows an "ergative-absolutive" case system. The latest development of the case system of this Eastern Indo-Aryan language indicates split-ergativity (Saikia and Camilleri, 2019). Pro-drop is another feature prominently observed in this language (Haddad, 2006).

The Bangla Language (ISO 639-ben), also known as *Bengali*, is an Eastern Neo-Indo-Aryan language spoken by over 300 million native speakers and close to 50 million second-language speakers (The Census Report of India:2011). Bangla is the 6<sup>th</sup> most spoken language around the globe. It is the official state language of West Bengal and Tripura, some parts of Assam, and the national language of Bangladesh. With an SOV word order, it exhibits a post-positional syntactic nature. The Bangla case system lacks ergativity and has an Ø marker in the nominative case. Dutta (2020) concludes that Bangla has a nominative-accusative case system displaying eight markers. It also allows for Pro-drop like many other Eastern Indo- Aryan languages. (Thompson, 2010)

The need to study cases for distinguishing cross-linguistic features was initially proposed by Fillmore (1968), emphasizing the finer distinction of case marking to determine relations between verbs and nouns. In his works of 1981 and 1986, Chomsky further developed the case theory to assign nominal roles to structural entities of a phrase to distinguish between the morpho-syntactic elements. The sequence of constituents in phrases only makes sense after determining the case of a language. Conversely, knowing the nature of the verb allows distinguishing the needed agreement, whether animate or inanimate, and the function required by the argument to align with the action that the verb refers to (e.g., agent, experiencer, instrument, location, etc.). The verb's intransitive, transitive, or ditransitive nature determines the number of arguments it can take. By the position of their occurrence, the case of the arguments can be assigned accordingly. This paper delves into the Genitive case marking of each language, analyzing the structure that emerges when evaluating the DP in detail. It adopts an approach aligned with the Minimalist theory proposed by Noam Chomsky in the 1990s. It contributes to

comprehending nominal and pronominal entities in a phrase following the principles of economy, merge, and abstract case.

### *3.1. The Determiner Phrase*

In alignment with the primary focus of this paper on emphasizing case markers, an in-depth examination of the Determiner Phrase (DP) becomes imperative. The question arises as to whether the DP operates as a functional projection of a lexical item, specifically a noun. This implies that akin to verb clauses, functional projections surround the noun, providing features that facilitate movement and their subsequent verification.

In this context, the determiner takes precedence. The premise posits that a Noun Phrase (NP) is almost invariably accompanied by a determiner, either preceding or succeeding it. Consequently, the argument centers on the assertion that the foremost functional category serving as the actual head in an NP is a determiner. The Determiner Phrase needs consideration when analyzing an NP, analogous to the idea of the T head as the uppermost head of the clause under the functional category.

In 1987, Steven Abney proposed that a noun phrase is typically accompanied and headed by a determiner, surrounded by functional items across various languages. Abney raised two pivotal questions: (I) the existence of a functional head in an NP, specifically the determiner, and (II) the argument whether determiners are lexical items falling under category D.

This hypothesis suggests that the conventional NP is a complement of the DP, where the determiner serves as the head in such cases. Subsequent development of this idea indicates that not only NPs overtly containing determiners (e.g., "the tree") fall under this construction, but also nominals containing proper names (e.g., "Rohan"), implying definiteness. Abney's hypotheses, later embraced by the minimalist theory, serve as crucial parameters for understanding movements and other feature operations facilitated by the DP. Examining both earlier and recent developments in the tree diagram of noun phrases aids in comprehensive comprehension.

In 1993, Chomsky endeavored to rationalize the syntactic rules of natural human languages within the Minimalist theory. This framework aims to increase the efficiency of configuring language into an interface that requires external support for processing and manipulating language to accomplish required tasks. The Minimalism theory, building on Universal Grammar, ensures the economy of language by eradicating redundancy or complexity where possible. Movements in Minimalism are allowed only when interpretable features need verification with uninterpretable features, generating a framework requiring justifiable reasoning to fulfill grammatical constraints.

Since the program is a developed version of the erstwhile framework of grammar that was being used, the D-structure and S-structure under this program do away with availing the PF (Phonetic Form) level that interacts with phonology and comes under the articulatory perceptual performance system and the LF (Lexical Form) that interacts with the semantics and comes under the conceptual-intentional performance system.

As a developed version of the erstwhile grammar framework, the D-structure and S-structure under Minimalism exclude the PF (Phonetic Form) level interacting with phonology and the LF (Lexical Form) interacting with semantics. The DP in Minimalism, proposed by Abney in 1987 and later supported by Radford (1994), applies not only to phrases with overt determiners but also to proper nouns indicating definiteness. Notably, determiners, especially in English, exhibit complementary distribution, meaning they compete for the same position within a phrase. The D category, accommodating complementary distribution, justifiably positions its



complements, including NP or AdjP, focusing on the Hierarchy of Projections. Although it does not provide a  $\theta$ -role, it offers features and checks for provided features through merge and movement operations.

The /-s/ marker in the English language, indicating a possessive case (e.g., "John's shirt") or referring to a verb in 3rd person singular present tense (e.g., "She plays the piano"), is the primary focus of this paper. This suffix competes for the determiner position with equal status in complementary distribution. The debate on DP versus NP remains disputable, as instances exist where the NP fulfills features carried by the /-s/ marker. However, the existence of a DP is upheld based on the presence of the determiner phrase with /-s/ as its head, sustaining the minimalist concern of uniform distribution and economy.

The principal objective of this paper is to substantiate this theory further and evaluate any changes in the languages under consideration.

### 3.2 *Theta Role in DP*

The theta criterion postulates that each argument in a sentence must carry a theta role, and any assigned theta role should be justified by an argument. This ensures consistency between the syntactic distribution of arguments, subcategorized by C-C-selectional features, and the semantic distribution of theta roles, assigned by S-selectional features. The Extended Projection Principle (EPP) within this framework necessitates an argument in the subject position with a theta-role, fulfilling subsequent functions.

It's crucial to note that while the EPP suggests introducing an expletive or a dummy subject in case the NP is absent, the theta role is not assigned to the expletive or dummy subject. For instance, in the sentence "it is raining," which lacks an NP, no theta role is assigned.

Theta roles are assigned based on the action demonstrated in sentences, such as:

- (1) The tiger killed the deer.

Here, the tiger is the *agent*, and the deer is the *theme*.

- (2) Malay went to Delhi.

Here, Malay is the *Agent*, and Delhi is the *Goal*.

- (3) The teacher gave candy to the students.

Here, the teacher is the *agent*, candy is the *theme*, and the students are the *recipients*.

- (4) The audience enjoyed the show.

Here, the audience is the *experiencer*, and the show is the *theme*.

- (5) The calf ran from the farm.

Here, the calf is the *theme*, and the farm is the *Source*.

Observing these examples, it becomes evident that both semantic and syntactic relations are influenced by when and where theta roles are assigned. For example:

- (6) The monkey talks

- (7) The door closed

- (8) \*John met

We can see the phrases (6) and (7) having one argument against the verb being grammatical since the verb does not require more than one argument to convey the meaning here. However, the phrase (8) having one argument is ungrammatical not only because of the absence of an object but also because it has no other argument to which the theta role of 'theme' that was ideally required could be assigned.

In the case of Determiner Phrases (DP), it is noteworthy that the determiner (D) heads do not receive any theta role; instead, the theta role is assigned to the entire lexical item. The DP structure introduces flexibility in theta role assignment:

(9) The tire of the car was punctured.

(10) The car's tire was punctured.

In the above sentences, the first posits the prepositional argument as the theme, while the second, with a possessive marker, presents it as *Saxon Genitive*. The DP framework allows for the assignment of theta roles even when there are two arguments, each carrying an *agent* and a *theme theta role*, with the former likely indicating a *Saxon Genitive* structure.

### 3.3 Case Checking in DP

The scope of the Determiner Phrase (DP) extends beyond noun phrases in the subject position to encompass those in the direct and indirect object positions. In maintaining grammatical integrity, proper case assignment is crucial to ensure complementary distribution. This concept becomes more apparent when examining pronouns that take different cases depending on their positions within phrases:

(11) \*He loves she

(12) He loves her.

(13) \*She dress

(14) Her dress

The examples above highlight the grammatical correctness of (12) and (14), where the pronoun 'her' appropriately takes the accusative case in the object position and the possessive case in the subject position. In contrast, (11) and (13) are deemed incorrect as pronouns with nominative and accusative cases have specific syntactic restrictions.

English exhibits a peculiar feature wherein pronouns like 'her' can seamlessly transition between accusative and possessive cases based on their syntactic roles. This flexibility allows constructions like (14) to be grammatically sound.

The Genitive case comes into play when expressing possession in English, often indicated by the /-'s/ marker. For example:

(15) \*John house

(16) John's house

Two integral steps ensure case checking in DP, elucidating case assignment, including *case licensing* and *case agreement*. The former guarantees that a specific argument holds only one case at a time, determined by morphological formation and syntactic position in the sentence. The latter ensures that the assigned case aligns with the marker allotted to the element, maintaining uniformity. For instance, if the assigned case is accusative, it must exhibit accusative functions and occupy a position that allows for such case assignment, aligning with the syntactic structure and locality conditioning prevalent in Indian languages.

### 3.4 Locality Condition in DP concerning case marking

The concept of *locality condition* within the Minimalism framework, as Chomsky introduced in his seminal work "The Minimalist Program" in 1995, has evolved into a fundamental principle governing and facilitating the movement of arguments based on their nominal properties. Since movement and merger are contingent on feature checking, the Locality Condition plays a pivotal role in delineating the conceivable interactions between these entities to uphold the economy of movement.

The locality condition functions as a filter in both case assignment and case agreement. For example, the assignment of a subjective case, such as the nominative, must align with the subject of the verb, and the same applies to objective case markers. The locality condition serves as a mechanism for scrutinizing morpho-syntactic case assignments and refining agreements between each phrase element. This is primarily executed through two key components of the *locality condition*, viz., the *Minimal Link Condition (MLC)* and *subjacency*. MLC posits that "a chain may not be established if the link is not properly contained." Consider the following example from Goalparia language:

- (17)    *sima-r*    *putul-ta*    *shei*    *shundor*  
           Sima-GEN doll-CLF    very.ADV    beautiful.ADJ  
           "Sima's doll is very beautiful."

Here, if the adverb "shei" is moved for emphasis, it must retain its properties without disrupting the semantic integrity of the sentence. This condition is further tested in sentences involving two NPs, where one is moved for emphasis while maintaining the same case marker, justifying the movement without compromising semantic properties.

The other principal tool, *subjacency*, restricts the movement of elements within their respective boundaries. It directly influences the assignment of case markers by prohibiting an argument with an objective case from moving to the subject position. This safeguard ensures the structural integrity of a syntactic structure by strictly tying case assignments to their positions and plausible domains of movement.

#### 4. Data Analysis: case assignment in declarative sentences

This section examines case assignments in declarative sentences across three languages: Goalpariya, Assamese, and Bangla. The focus is on understanding any differences or similarities in the genitive case marking. Let's explore examples illustrating the occurrence of Determiner Phrases (DP) in these languages:

##### Goalpariya:

- (18)    *ei-te*    *ram-er*    *bari*  
           This-CLF    Ram-GEN    home.N  
           "This is Ram's house."
- (19)    *sima-r*    *putul-ta*    *shei*    *shundor*  
           Sima-GEN doll-CLF    very.ADV    beautiful.ADJ  
           "Sima's doll is very beautiful."
- (20)    *ei-te*    *ui-er*    *gari*  
           this-CLF    he/she-GEN    car-N  
           "This is her/his car."
- (21)    *amra*    *ui-er*    *bari-t*  
           we    he/she-GEN    home-LOC  
           "We are at her/her home."

- (22) *ei-te mor boi*  
 this-CLF my-GEN book-N  
 “This is my book.”
- (23) *ui-er nam lekha ase*  
 He/she-GEN name.N write be-3SG.PST  
 “Her name is written.”
- (24) *ui ram-er beti*  
 she ram-GEN daughter-N  
 “She is Ram’s daughter.”

The Goalpariya examples above indicate that the pronoun ‘ui’ has been used interchangeably to denote both the masculine and feminine genders. This feature leads us to understand that unlike Assamese (discussed below), this particular language has no gender distinction in the third-person singular pronoun.

**Assamese:**

- (25) *ei-tu ram-or ghor*  
 This-CLF Ram-GEN home.N  
 “This is Ram’s home”
- (26) *sima-r putola-tu bor dhunia*  
 Sima-GEN doll-CLF very.ADV beautiful.ADJ  
 “Sima’s doll is very beautiful.”
- (27) *ei-tu ta-r gari*  
 This-CLF he-GEN car.N  
 “This is his car.”
- (28) *ami ta-r ghor-ot*  
 We he-GEN home-LOC  
 “We are at his home.”
- (29) *ei-khn mur kitap*  
 This-CLF my. GEN book.N  
 “This is my book.”
- (30) *ta-ir naam likh-a as-e*  
 She-GEN name.N write-PST be-3SG.PST  
 “Her name is written.”
- (31) *tai ram-or jiyek*  
 She Ram- GEN daughter.N  
 “She is Ram’s daughter.”

In the Assamese language, the genitive case markers are attached to the NP in a manner similar to the Goalparia and the Bangla languages. However, we find a clear gender distinction in the Pronominals in terms of 'ta-r' for the masculine pronoun 'ta' to which the genitive '-r' is attached (28) and 'tai-r' for the feminine pronoun 'tai' to which the genitive marker '-r' is attached once again (30).

**Bangla:**

- (32) *e-ta ram-er bari*  
This-CLF Ram-GEN home.N  
"This is Ram's home."
- (33) *sima-r putul-ta khub shundor*  
Sima-GEN doll-CLF very.ADV beautiful.ADJ  
"Sima's doll is very beautiful."
- (34) *e-ta or gari*  
This-CLF he. GEN car. N  
"This is his car."
- (35) *amra or bari-te*  
We he. GEN home- LOC  
"We are at his home."
- (36) *e-ta amar boi*  
This-CLF my. GEN book.N  
"This is my book."
- (37) *or naam lekh-a ache*  
She.GEN name.N write-PST be.3SG.PST  
"Her name is written."
- (38) *o ram-er meye*  
She Ram- GEN daughter.N  
"She is Ram's daughter."

The Bangla language synchronizes more with Goalparia regarding gender agreement as it has no masculine or feminine distinction for pronominals occurring as the third person singular.

The data above presents the appearance of the Determiner Phrase in Declarative Sentences. In Bangla and Goalparia, we can see that the Genitive marker is /-er/. However, in Assamese, the genitive marker is either /-r/ or /-or/, depending on the word it is attached to. Although Assamese is a language with a split-ergative case system that varies with the nominative-accusative case system of Bangla and Goalparia, we can infer that the genitive marking system is uniform in all three languages. For better understanding, let us look into a sentence in Assamese that has ergative as well as genitive case marking:

- a. *raju-e sheela-r kitap-khn pela-i di-le*  
 Raju-ERG Sheela-GEN book-CLF throw-PST give-3SG.PST  
 “Raju has thrown Sheela’s book.”

In the sentence above, we can observe not one but two case markings. However, the ergative case marking attached to the subject NP does not interfere with the argument that carries the genitive case marker.

We can derive from these representations that the /-er/ in Bangla and Goalparia and the /-or/ in Assamese are Genitive markers that denote possession and accommodate in the head of the Determiner Phrase posing as a Saxon Genitive that we can see in an argument like John’s in English. Although, in English, the argument can occur in the spec of the phrase leaving the D head empty, which we also refer to as Null D, that does not seem to be the case with these three languages as they also carry a demonstrative attached with a classifier to establish definiteness and that has to be seated in the spec of the Determiner Phrase.

Another significant revelation that the study of these three languages has provided us with is the Genitive marker /-er/, /-r/, and /-or/, depending upon the language and the NP that it is attached to, acts as the *linker* between the two noun phrases. For example:

- (39) *ei-te ram-er bari*  
 This-CLF Ram-GEN home.N  
 “This is Ram’s home.”

- (40) *ei-tu ram-or ghor*  
 This-CLF Ram-GEN home.N  
 “This is Ram’s home”

- (41) *e-ta Ram-er bari*  
 This-CLF Ram-GEN home.N  
 “This is Ram’s home.”

The same sentence in all three languages under study has a genitive marker attached to the Proper Noun “Ram” about the property of the linguistic characteristics of each language. The one common standpoint is how the *possessor* is linked to the *possessed* by the genitive case marker in all three languages. This steers the path to comprehend how the genitive case marker that occurs in the head of the DP acts as a probe towards the NP “Ram,” whose goal is to move to the spec of the DP, leaving a trace in the spec of NP.

The sentence, after ruling out the classifier “ei-te” for Goalparia, “ei-tu” for Assamese, and “e-ta” for Bangla, the phrase that we are left with is “Ram-er Bari” for Goalparia as well as Bangla and “Ram-or ghor” for Assamese. The presented data elucidates the uniformity and distinctions in genitive case assignment across the three languages, offering insights into their linguistic characteristics. Further analysis will involve constructing tree diagrams to visualize the case assignment process and trace movement within the DP structure.

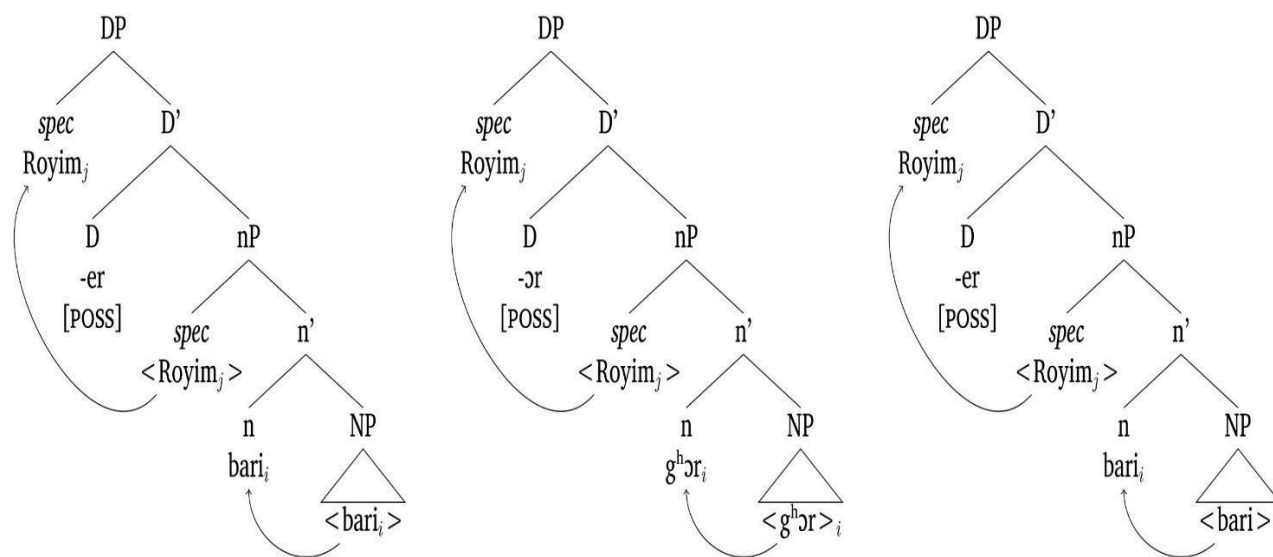


Figure: Tree diagrams of Goalpariya, Assamese, and Bangla

This projection aids in looking into the position of the genitive case marker. It further affirms that a genitive attached to an NP has the property to act as the sole linker between two NPs and does not necessitate another classifier to be attached to avoid redundancy when it comes to proper nouns in particular concerning these three languages. The genitive marker distribution of the three languages can be further understood from the table given below:

	Goalpariya	Assamese	Bangla
<b>Genitive Marker</b>	'-er' / '-r'	'-or' / '-r'	'-er' / '-r'

## 5. Conclusion

This study reveals that the languages under examination—Goalpariya, Assamese, and Bangla—exhibit remarkably similar case marking systems, specifically in the context of the Genitive case denoting possession. The Genitive case plays a crucial role in indicating ownership of an object or entity across these languages. A key observation from this study is that the Genitive marker seamlessly integrates into the head of the Determiner phrase. Being a bound morpheme, it lacks the robust features required for facilitating movement, thus forming an island. This linguistic phenomenon persists across all three languages, even in the case of Assamese, which features a split-ergative case-marking system.

While this study sheds light on the behavior of the Genitive case marker, it raises intriguing questions about how other case markers may behave and whether they yield different outcomes. These inquiries beckon further investigation for a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of case marking in these languages.

## Abbreviation

Asm	Assamese
ADJ	Adjective
Adj P	Adjective Phrase
ADV	Adverb

Ben	Bangla
C-command	Constituent command
CLF	Classifier
C-selection	Category selection
D-structure	Deep structure
DP	Determiner Phrase
EPP	Extended Projection Principle
ERG	Ergative case
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
LF	Lexical Form
LOC	Locative case
MLC	Minimal Link Condition
N	Noun
NP	Noun Phrase
PF	Phonetic Form
Pro-drop	Pronoun dropping
PST	Past
SOV	Subject-Object-Verb
S-selection	Semantic selection
S-structure	Surface structure
UG	Universal Grammar
3SG	3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular

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## Echo-formation in Bodo

<sup>1</sup>*Daithun Baro & <sup>2</sup>Hemanta Mochahary<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>*Bongaigaon College, Assam*

<sup>2</sup>*Cotton University, Assam*

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### ABSTRACT

Echo-formation is a morphophonemic modification that only partially reduplicates lexical levels. The medial and final positions of the original word stay the same during echo-formation; only the first phoneme or syllable is altered, examples for Bodo echo-formation: mansi-sansi 'man and the like', dau-sau 'bird and the similar', lama-sama 'road, etc'.

The echo words have a semantic relationship and exhibit some strong similarity between the two sets of words. The echo words enhance or expand the meaning of the head word, but they do not have their own distinct or independent meanings. The aim of the present study is to explore the formation of echoes in Bodo language through the structural analysis method from a morphological point of view.

## 1. Introduction

The Bodo (bɔrɔ) language belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family, specifically the Bodo sub-section of Bodo-Naga under the Assam Burmese group of the Tibeto-Burman branch (Bhattacharya, 1977). The Bodo language has a large number of echo words which are being used by the speakers of their day-to-day social life. Worth mentioning that, practically, the echo word usage is completely a feature of colloquial spoken speech. It is avoided in formal speech (standard language) and writing in the language. The echo-formation can be termed as echo-word-formation or echo reduplication. Echo-formation or echo reduplication is the subfield of reduplication and it belongs to lexical reduplication. Here, the main points of discussions are-echo formation, treatment of echo formation, types of echo formation, meaning of echo formation etc. Echo formation is the process of replacing a phoneme or syllable from the base word with a different phoneme (vowel or consonant) or syllable in a partially repeated form. The "replacer" sequence (phonemes/syllables) may or may not be unique, but it may also never occur in large numbers. The original root word or initial word receives the meaning "etcetera," "thing similar to" or "associate with that" from the word of echoes (Abbi, 1991). Besides, the term "echo-formations" pertains to the replacement of the syllable or initial phoneme of a base word with a different syllable or phoneme that neither has an individual occurrence nor a distinct meaning (Parimalagantham, 2008). As a result, in the reduplicated word of the original phoneme or syllable, echo-formation is a morphophonemic alternation.

## 2. Objectives

The main objectives of the study are –

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [hemanta.mochahary@cottonuniversity.ac.in](mailto:hemanta.mochahary@cottonuniversity.ac.in)

1. To know the echo-formation, its types and function.
2. To draw out the typological features of echo-formation in Bodo.
3. To know how the echo-formation takes a vital role to constitute fresh words in Bodo.

### 3. Methodology

The proposed study of this paper has adopted a structural analysis method from the Linguistic and sociological point of view. The data for the proposed study has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. For primary data the researcher has been gathered from the native informants. As well as the researcher, he himself can provide the necessary data for this study by acting as an informant. Secondary data has been gathered from printed sources such as lexicons, dictionaries, manuscripts, Bodo books, etc. In reading textbooks and other fictional books whenever and wherever the echo words have been found, the researcher noted and applied them as examples.

### 4. Discussion

Echo-formation is a key aspect of lexical reduplication. A phoneme, syllable, or initial position of a reduplicated word can be replaced to create the echo word. The morphophonemic change identified as “echo-formation” represents only a partial lexical-level reduplication. The syllable or initial phoneme changed in echo-formation. Likewise, phonemes or syllables maintain their medial and final places and remain unchanged. The echo words represent how closely comparable the two groups of words are to one another and have a semantic relationship. The words echo augment or extend the interpretation of the original word, but they do not have their own distinct or independent meanings. e.g. -

(a) musuu- suusu  
cow-ECH  
‘cow and the like.’

(b) suima- t<sup>h</sup>uima  
dog-ECH  
‘dog and the like.’

In the aforementioned, the base word ‘musuu’ (cow) and ‘suima’ (dog) are noun words with separate independent meanings; in contrast, the echo-forms of its suusu and t<sup>h</sup>uima lack independent meanings. The syllable or first phoneme in echo words may alter either s (स) or t<sup>h</sup> (थ) based on their initial syllable or phoneme to the root word or the first word.

Nonetheless, the echo-formation represents a component of lexical reduplication but not a partial reduplication. Because other positions in echo-formation remain unchanged, the initial syllable or phoneme only changes. In contrast, the lexical word’s initial or final position changes in partial reduplication. As for example:

#### 4. 1 Partial Reduplication change in initial phoneme/syllable:

- a. saya-maya  
shadow-RED  
“clearly invisible/appearing only for an instant”
- b. awt<sup>h</sup>ali-p<sup>h</sup>awt<sup>h</sup>ali  
upside down-RED  
“right and left/at random”

#### 4. 2 Partial Reduplication change in final phoneme/syllable:

- a. haŋma-haŋsa  
unfulfilled hope-RED  
“cares and anxieties/unfulfilled desires”
- b. harao-hat<sup>h</sup>ao  
misaligned teeth-RED  
“having uneven teeth/uneven state”

### 5. Echo-formation treatment in Bodo

In the Bodo, the echo-words, the base word's initial syllable or phoneme is changed to another initial syllable or phoneme, notably /t<sup>h</sup>/, and it retains the vowel of the root word. e.g. –

**dao-t<sup>h</sup>ao** “birds and the similar”, **suima-t<sup>h</sup>uima** “dogs and the similar” etc. (Brahma, 2013).

Furthermore, this language has echo words that are used to illustrate both human and non-human objects. e.g., lama-sama “road and the similar”, **jwngk<sup>h</sup>wl-mak<sup>h</sup>wl** “shining and the similar”, and **bwrai-swrai** “old man and the like”.

However, observation may be mentioned here, in echo-formation, another phoneme replaces the initial phoneme or syllable (vowel or consonant) of the base during echoing, becoming either /s/ ‘**स**’/ or /t<sup>h</sup>/ ‘**थ**’/. The occurrence of /t<sup>h</sup>/ ‘**थ**’/ during reduplication appears extremely uncommon in the Bodo language. During the echo-formation, the majority of phonemes are substituted with the consonant syllable or phoneme /s/ ‘**स**’/. As for example – *guza-suza* “red and others”, *gwbwr-swbwr* “cow dung and the similar”. On the other hand, /t<sup>h</sup>/ ‘**थ**’/ syllable substitutes the initial syllable or phoneme when the base word starts with the /s/ ‘**स**’/ consonant or syllable. e.g.- *sikhaw-thikhaw* “theft and the similar”, *sudem-thudem* “calmness and the similar”, etc. Bodo echo words are generally lexical reduplications. Depending on the base words and their context, echo words might signify “etcetera or such and such,” “and the like,” “things similar to,” and “associate with that.”

### 6. Bodo echo-formation types

Three structural types of echo-formation exist in the Bodo language. The following provides an analysis of these, along with pertinent instances.

- (i) Firstly, during the echo-formation, the consonant phonemes at the beginning of each syllable, with the exception of /s/ ‘**स**’/, are substituted with the consonant /s/ ‘**स**’/.

For example:

Stem	Meaning	ER	Meaning
ɔma	“pig”	ɔma-soma	“pig and the like.”
mansi	“man”	mansi-sansi	“man and the like.”
mairɔŋ	“rice”	mairɔŋ-sairɔŋ	“rice, etc.”
nɔ	“house”	nɔ-sɔ	“house, etc.”
bizab	“book”	bizab-sizab	“book, etc.”

In the aforementioned examples, the initial phonemes of lexical components such as /ɔ, m, n, n, b/ are converted to the phoneme /s/ in the reduplicate echo words. These represent the ideas of “the like” and “etcetera.” But in the case of particular echo words, particularly proper names beginning with any consonant syllable or phoneme other than /s/, they may be substituted with the /t<sup>h</sup>/ phoneme. e.g.-

Stem	Meaning	ER	Meaning
------	---------	----	---------

Laisri	“a” name”	laisri-t <sup>h</sup> aisri	“laisri and others.”
Alaisri	“a name”	alaisri-t <sup>h</sup> alaisri	“alaisri and others”

- (a) The aforementioned examples are shown in the sentences as follows:

bari-aw            ɔma-sɔma            hab-p<sup>h</sup>ui-zuub-baj  
 garden-NOM    pig-ECH                    enter-come-finish-IPA  
 “Pigs have entered the garden.”

- (b) hat<sup>h</sup>ai-awmansi-sansi    fuii-a-nama (?)  
 market-NOM    man-ECH            to come-NEGS-INTR  
 “Isn't there anyone in the market?”

- (ii) The first syllable or phoneme in Bodo starts with /s ‘स’/ and is replaced by /t<sup>h</sup> ‘थ’/ during the formation of echo words, which is the second form of echo formation. e.g. -

Stem	Meaning	ER	Meaning
suima	“dog”	suima-t <sup>h</sup> uima	“dog, etc.”
su	“thorn”	su-t <sup>h</sup> u	“thorn, etc.”
sik <sup>h</sup> aw	“thief”	sik <sup>h</sup> aw-t <sup>h</sup> ik <sup>h</sup> aw	“thief, etc.”
sandri	“sieve”	sandri-t <sup>h</sup> andri	“sieve, etc.”
saha	“tea”	saha-t <sup>h</sup> aha	“tea, etc.”

Example of sentences-

- (a) uŋk<sup>h</sup>am-k<sup>h</sup>u            suima-t<sup>h</sup>uima            za-laŋ-baj  
 rice-ACC            dog-ECH                    eat-take away-IPA  
 “Dogs have eaten rice.”

- (b) sandal    gan-a-bla                    at<sup>h</sup>iŋ-aw            su-t<sup>h</sup>u            hab-gun  
 sandal    put on-NEGS-COND            foot-LOC            thorn-ECH            may pierce -FUT  
 “If the slippers are not worn, thorns may pierce the foot.”

- (iii) There are not many differences between this type of echo formation and the above discussions. A few monosyllabic and disyllabic noun words that have the echo construction beginning with the vowel phonemes /ɔ/ and /u/ are being discussed here. In words that begin with the vowel phoneme /ɔ/, the consonant phoneme /s/ appears as a prothesis; in words that begin with the vowel phoneme /u/, the consonant phonemes /th/ or /s/ occur as a prothesis before /u/.

As for examples-

Stem	Meaning	ER	Meaning
ɔr	“fire”	ɔr-sɔr	“fire, etc.”
ɔk <sup>h</sup> a	“rain”	ɔk <sup>h</sup> a-sɔk <sup>h</sup> a	“rain, etc.”
uŋk <sup>h</sup> am	“rice”	uŋk <sup>h</sup> am-suŋk <sup>h</sup> am	“rice, etc.”
uŋk <sup>h</sup> ri	“curry”	uŋk <sup>h</sup> ri-suŋk <sup>h</sup> ri	“curry, etc.”

Example of sentences –

- (i) mansi-a            ɔr-sɔr                    bu-k<sup>h</sup>ar-zuub-baj  
 man-NOM            fire-ECH                    threw-finish-IPA  
 “Man has threw the burning fire.”

- (ii) dinui            ɔk<sup>h</sup>a-sɔk<sup>h</sup>a                    ha-nui            ha-guru  
 today            rain-ECH                    to come-SUBS            able-COND  
 “it may raining today.”

(iii) bi-uw	uwŋk <sup>h</sup> am-suwŋk <sup>h</sup> am	za-a-lasinuw	t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-baj
3SG-NOM	rice-ECH	eat-NEGS-SUBS	go-IPA
“He has left without eating any rice.”			

Above mentioned are the three forms of echo-formation in the Bodo language. The head word's meaning is expanded by the echo-formation, despite the fact that it cannot produce additional lexemes.

In the Bodo, almost all significant elements of speech and their derivatives contain echo-formations. Here, the formation of echoes of nouns, pronouns, and adjectives has been considered for discussion.

### 6. 1 Nouns echo-formation

In Bodo, all nouns are capable of assuming echo forms. Nouns with the following meanings that are employed as language echo words: "etcetera," "and the like," "and others," etc. There may be echo forms in relation to proper names, terminology of kinship, animals and birds, parts of the human body, musical instruments, colour, etc. The following are a few examples –

Stem	Meaning	ER	Meaning
Birdaw	“a name”	birdaw-sirdaw	“birdaw and other persons”
ap <sup>h</sup> a	“father”	ap <sup>h</sup> a-sap <sup>h</sup> a	“father and other persons”
ai	“mother”	ai-sai	“mother and other persons”
musuwu	“cow”	musuwu-susuwu	“cow and the like.”
suima	“dog”	suima-t <sup>h</sup> uima	“dog and the like.”
ɔnt <sup>h</sup> ai	“stone”	ɔnt <sup>h</sup> ai-sɔnt <sup>h</sup> ai	“stone and etc.”
dɔŋp <sup>h</sup> aŋ	“tree”	dɔŋp <sup>h</sup> aŋ-sɔŋp <sup>h</sup> aŋ	“tree and etc.”
ɔk <sup>h</sup> a	“rain”	ɔk <sup>h</sup> a-sɔk <sup>h</sup> a	“rain and etc.”

### 6. 2 Pronouns echo-formation

In Bodo, pronouns have all echo-formations, which convey emphasis, with the exception of reflexive pronouns. As for example –

Stem	Meaning	ER	Meaning
aŋ	“I”	aŋ saŋ	“I, etc.”
nuwŋ	“you”	nuwŋ suwŋ	“you, etc.”
bi	“he/she/it”	bi si	“he/she/it, etc.”
be	“this”	be se	“this and the like”
bui	“that”	bui sui	“that and the like”
ma	“what”	ma sa	“what, etc.”
sur	“who”	sur t <sup>h</sup> ur	“who, etc.”

### 6. 3 Adjectives echo-formation

Adjectives are employed in echo-formations in Bodo and are also employed in the expression of language, as "etcetera" means. As for example –

Stem	Meaning	ER	Meaning
guzuwu	“high/tall”	guzuwu suzuwu	“high, etc.”
gahai	“low”	gahai sahai	“low, etc.”
geder	“big”	geder seder	“big, etc.”
rezeŋ	“light”	rezeŋ sezeŋ	“light, etc.”
lasui	“slow”	lasui sasui	“slow, etc.”
guusum	“black”	guusum-suusum	“black and the like”
gup <sup>h</sup> ur	“white”	gup <sup>h</sup> ur-sup <sup>h</sup> ur	“white and the like”

## 7. Function of Echo-formation

Language uses echo-formation to represent a variety of meanings and purposes. Through echo-formation, a sentence might become affirmative, negative, or interrogative. As mentioned in the introduction section, echo-words are avoided in formal speaking (standard language) and when writing. These are essentially used in informal language while discussing different social contexts.

However, the speaker's tone is the only factor that determines this interrogative formulation, and there are interrogative words or phrases used here. e.g.-

- |     |                 |                  |           |        |
|-----|-----------------|------------------|-----------|--------|
| (a) | apha-a (aphaya) | hathai-sathai-aw | thaŋ-baj  | khuma? |
|     | Father-NOM      | market-ECH-LOC   | to go-IPA | DOUB   |
- “Perhaps father has gone to the market?”

The cited above example (a) does not apply in standard or formal speech. We have seen that the echo-word takes the locative case marker *-aw* while applying in the syntactic level. But, in formal speech the echo-word will drop and the locative case maker is freely attached with the base word, and the interrogative word may change with other forms. In formal speech this would be as following:

- |     |            |  |                          |
|-----|------------|--|--------------------------|
| (a) | ai-a       | p <sup>h</sup> ut <sup>h</sup> ar-aw t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-bai | janan <sup>h</sup> guu ? |
|     | Mother-NOM | field-LOC to go-IPA  | DOUB                     |
- “Perhaps mother has gone to the field?”
- |     |         |  |         |                     |
|-----|---------|--|---------|---------------------|
| (b) | bi-u    | uŋk <sup>h</sup> am-suŋk <sup>h</sup> am | za-baj  | k <sup>h</sup> uma? |
|     | 3SG-NOM | rice-ECH                                 | eat-IPA | DOUB                |
- “Perhaps s/he eaten rice?”

In the above cited example (b) presents no case indicators are accepted for the echo word. Somehow, the echo word may or may not use any case markers or suffixes in a sentence, but these depend on the contextual use and structure of sentences. e.g. –

- |     |         |                     |         |             |                 |
|-----|---------|---------------------|---------|-------------|-----------------|
| (a) | bi-u    | uŋk <sup>h</sup> am | za-baj  | za-nw       | ha-guu?         |
|     | 3SG-NOM | rice-ECH            | eat-IPA | to eat-SUBS | to be able-COND |
- “Perhaps s/he has eaten rice?”

The aforementioned examples are formal and informal speaking. In this way all the cited examples of echo-words can be structured in formal and informal speech which is possible only at sentence level.

Echo-formation is also conceivable when the speaker wishes to remain anonymous about the reason for their journey or does not want to let people know exactly where they are going. e.g.-

- |     |     |                                |                      |               |
|-----|-----|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| (a) | bi  | gami-sami-p <sup>h</sup> ur-aw | t <sup>h</sup> aŋ-nu | ha-guu        |
|     | 3SG | village-ECH-PL-LOC             | go-SUBS              | probably-COND |
- “Perhaps s/he probably go to the village.”
- |     |     |                             |         |               |
|-----|-----|-----------------------------|---------|---------------|
| (b) | aŋ  | k <sup>h</sup> amani-samani | maw-nu  | ha-guu        |
|     | 1SG | work-ECH                    | do-SUBS | probably-COND |
- “I probably do the work.”

When a speaker feels displeased with any cause, the subsequent sentences echo-formations can be utilised to convey their intolerable mood. The echo formation can happen in that circumstance. e.g. –

- |     |               |     |      |                      |
|-----|---------------|-----|------|----------------------|
| (a) | mōntri-sōntri | aŋ  | zebu | mit <sup>h</sup> i-a |
|     | minister-ECH  | 1SG | any  | to understand-NEGS   |
- “I don’t care minister or other.”

(b) ap <sup>h</sup> a-sap <sup>h</sup> a	an	gi-a
father-ECH	1SG	to fear-NEGS
“I have no fear of my father or anyone else.”		

In Bodo, the echo-formation might happen if someone is irritating or making the situation worse.

## 8. Conclusion

In this paper, we explored the elements of echo-formation and how they are used in the Bodo language, which is something different from other Indian languages. It has been found that Bodo has three distinct echo-formation kinds, and each of these is productive and capable of producing new lexemes. However, it is mentionable that in actuality, the echo words provide meaning of additional, related meanings associated with the head word. The significant findings of the study are that the initial syllable or phoneme in echo words, which begins any phonemes (vowel or consonant) except /s, ʃ/ consonant is highest in numbers. In contrast to this, the initial phonemes or syllables which start /s, ʃ/ consonants that are very marginal in number. Similar to other languages, the Bodo language has a great number of echo words, and echo formation can exist in all major grammatical categories. There is wider scope of discussions from theoretical and sociological viewpoints.

## Abbreviations

1SG	1 <sup>st</sup> Person Singular
3SG	3 <sup>rd</sup> Person Singular
ACC	Accusative Case
COND	Conditional Echo
ECH	Echo
ER	Echo-reduplication
FUT	Future Tense
INTR	Interrogative
IPA	Immediate Past
LOC	Locative Case
NOM	Nominative Case
NEGS	Negative suffix
PL	Plural
RED	Reduplication
SUBS	Subordinating suffix

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## The Challenges of Education in a Multilingual Society. A case of Gujarat State

Obadia .Y. Mbilinyi & Jagdish Joshi<sup>1</sup>

Gujarat University

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to throw light on multilingualism in Gujarat state in India. As language is part of culture, the linguistic situation in the system of education is something not to overlook. The medium of instruction used for provision of education is worth considering. Methodology, the study took a qualitative approach. The researcher observed the situation, administered a questionnaire and a semi structured interview to elicit responses from the respondents. The study findings revealed that two languages, Gujarati and English are used for education provision. Gujarati is highly used for primary, secondary and University education. English is used in English medium primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary education. Many students showed interest in learning English for them to be able to grab global opportunities. Gujarati language is highly used for university education despite a great influence of English. English is largely used to prepare students for opportunities in the world. English is also used to meet the needs of international students admitted in the universities. Hindi is declared an official language and is taught as a subject. It is suggested to improve the use of the English language for international students as it was found that Gujarati language is highly used in classes, documents and answer booklets. This is a challenge to most of the international students.

### 1. Introduction

Language is a center of education provision and an important part of culture. According to Block and Trager (1975) Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols that are used by humans to communicate. The symbols are brought together and they form different levels of language elements. It starts with a sound to syllable the word, phrase, clause and then sentence. Each language has rules that guide its use. If the rules are not followed then the constructions will be considered ill formed.

For centuries there have been contacts of different societies with different linguistic backgrounds (Thomason, 2001). The contacts lead to multilingualism in social life and in the domain of education. Since language is part of culture, it is worth saying multicultural and intercultural largely encompasses linguistic multilingualism. Multilingualism is a multicultural aspect in society. According to UNESCO, *Universal declaration of diversity* (2002) as cited in (Allam, 2021) “culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.” This paper

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [obadiaymbilinyi@gmail.com](mailto:obadiaymbilinyi@gmail.com) & [joshjagdish@gmail.com](mailto:joshjagdish@gmail.com)

studies multilingualism as one aspect of multi-culture in education. Three languages are observed, Gujarati, English and Hindi. There is very high language diversity in India. India is a country in which people from different tribes live in peace. There are almost 200 languages all over the country.

Gujarat is a state found at the western coast of India, it is one of the prominent states of India. It borders Pakistan country to the North West, Rajasthan state to the north, Madhya Pradesh and the Union territories of Dadra to the east, Diu, Nagar haveli and the state of Maharashtra to the south. To the west it borders the Arabian Sea. It is a very industrialized state.

The medium of instruction in government primary and secondary schools is Gujarati. In private schools, the medium of instruction is mostly English; Tertiary education is provided in both Gujarati and English. Gujarat, like other states in India has societal and individual multilingualism in the sense that the society has three languages that operate and individuals have some languages that they can speak. Some speak Gujarati, Hindi and English, Some Gujarati and English, and there are individuals from other states who speak their state language and English. According to Delican (n.d.) Gujarat has 7.3% of bilingualism. Urdu speakers have the highest percentage of bilingualism at 22.1%. The percentage of bilinguals in the other languages are; Assamese 9.0%, Bengali 8.7%, Hindi 55.1%, Kannada 14.4%, Kashmiri 10.2%, Tamil 8.1% and Telugu 14%.

Different languages are used in different contexts in Gujarat, for example in religious context Gujarati and Hindi are used. Gujarati is used in family and religious domains; in schools both Gujarati and English are used. Hindi is taught as a subject and is used for communication with Indians from states outside Gujarat. This multilingual situation has some complications in education provision. The study was interested in the ups and downs of this multilingual situation in the provision of education.

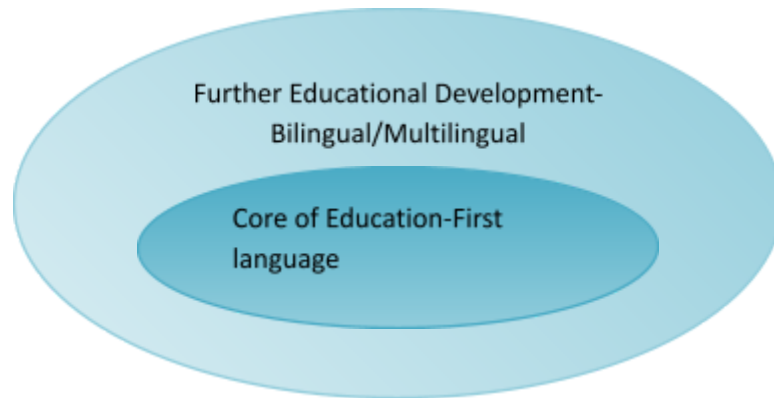
## **2. Research Objectives**

The objective of this research is to identify the multilingual situation of Gujarat state and find out the challenges resulting from the situation. Gujarati is a language of wider communication, English is a medium of instruction in secondary schools and universities and Hindi is a declared official language, the study aimed to identify the position of each language. Since there are international students in different universities in Gujarat, the study wants to unveil the linguistic challenges they face.

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

The study is based on some models to get a theoretical view of multilingual education in a multicultural educational context. Models of multilingualism discuss bilingualism and multilingualism differently, They consider bilingualism as a form of multilingualism. Most of the models refer to multilingualism as multiple acquisitions of languages. Multilingual education in different contexts has demonstrated that teaching and learning in multiple languages works for minority students, this means only a small number of students will benefit from multiple languages used in teaching. Secondly, the most effective programmes tend to be those that offer two-way developmental bilingual education followed by those offering one-way developmental bilingual education together with second language taught through academic content (Kirss, 2020). The most effective multilingual programme is when students are taught using their first language.

After going through some multilingual programmes, the model below is suggested for a successful provision of education in a multilingual community. The model suggests the first language as a medium of instruction and embraces second language and foreign languages for further educational development and opportunities.



**Figure 1:** *Multilingual Education Model*  
(Mbilinyi, 2023)

The figure above suggests a model of multilingual education. The model suggests using the learners' first language at early stages of education. Early childhood education and primary school education should be taught in learners' first language. As learners head to secondary education and tertiary education, other languages can be injected. Injecting foreign languages at early stages can lead to difficulty in learning as learners learn well in the language they know well which is normally their first language. Using other languages at early stages of education symbolises linguistic colonialism and leads to loss of linguistic diversity.

#### **4. Methodology**

The study took a qualitative approach. Both primary and secondary data were collected. The researcher used the questionnaire and the semi structured interview to collect primary data. Observation also took place since the researcher was physically present in Gujarat state. The Respondents were students and professors from universities and secondary schools teachers. Secondary data were also collected from different documents on multilingual education and multiculturalism. The interest of the researcher was to know the multilingual situation of Gujarat state. The study intended to get answers for such questions as; which languages are spoken by people of the state? Which languages are used for teaching in classes? Which language dominates over others? How does the multilingual situation affect a student's performance? How are non-Guajarati and Hindi speaking students treated? How do students from different linguistic backgrounds catch up?

#### **5. Results and Discussion**

The study found two languages used as the medium of instruction in the state of Gujarat. Most government schools use Gujarati as a medium of instruction. Some schools (mostly privately owned) have English as the medium of instruction. This makes a difference when these students join universities; those who can't speak English are compelled to go through an English program to familiarize them with English language use. According to one of the respondents, students are

compelled to attend personality courses offered by some institutions to prepare them for university education. Together with life skills, students are taught the English language. Some students expecting to join Universities listen to YouTube English lessons to improve their proficiency.

In the year 2020 a new education policy was established. According to the 2020 new education policy, the bilingual medium of instruction has been put in place. The policy says all languages will be taught with high quality to all students (Ministry of Human & Resource Development, 2020). The aim of bilingual education policy is preservation of the mother tongue and helping students attain mastery of a global language. Since there is extensive use of technology, languages suggested for instruction aim at removing language barriers by including English as a medium of instruction (Joshi & Somani, 2021). Elicitation has shown that parents' preference in Gujarati as a medium of instruction is decreasing. Most of the parents would like to see their children having knowledge of English at early stages. They would like to see their children capable of communicating English, the *lingua franca* of the world. Many youths have dreams of going abroad to search for better life opportunities. Most of those who would like to live abroad prefer having life in Canada and the USA. Some families already have their family members living in Canada.

Although Hindi is constitutionally an official language, it is not mentioned anywhere in this policy. The education policy in Gujarat discusses only two languages, Gujarati and English. The two languages are the ones dominating in Gujarat as a medium of instruction. As the theory claims that effective education can be given when a child is taught in his first language, this is what happens in Gujarat. In schools education is given in Gujarati and English. Parents and students consider English to be important; this pushes most of them to learn English. The assumption is; it is difficult to meet the opportunities without competence in English.

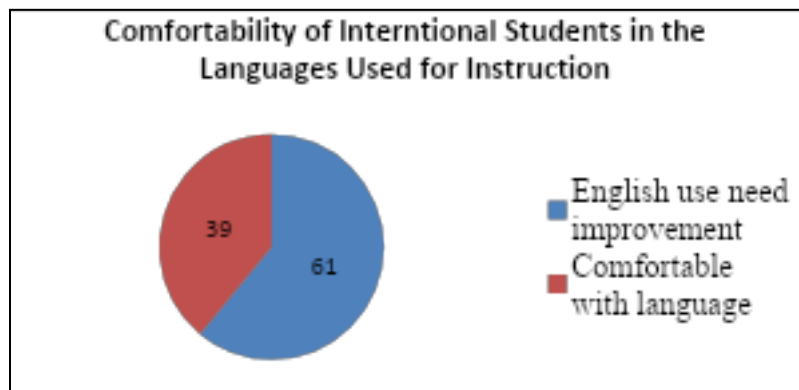
### *5.1 International Students and the Language Challenges they Face*

There are 30 universities in Gujarat, 1 is a central university, 18 are state universities, and two are deemed to be universities. There are 9 private universities. Most of the international students in Gujarat speak English. Students come from different nations, with different language backgrounds and accents; almost all can speak English at different levels of fluency and grammatical correctness. International students are not compelled to learn Gujarati or Hindi after being admitted to join universities for studies. International students face a communication challenge in a variety of ways. First, most of the service providers speak Gujarati, when processing registration students meet workers who either can't speak English at all or speak English with difficulty. Those who speak English speak with a Gujarati accent. English in Gujarati accent can be understood by carefully listening to the speaker. Sound [w] is normally pronounced as [v] by Gujarat native speakers. The word when is pronounced as *ven*.

Documents and announcements for international students are printed in Gujarati, the answer booklets are also in Gujarati, in such a circumstance a student is compelled to seek help from a Gujarati bilingual to translate. One of the respondents reported one of the classes with two international English speaking students. The class has sixty four students sixty two of whom are Gujarati speakers, when professors enter classes are compelled to consider a large number of students speaking Gujarati and they therefore use Gujarati language. Two non Gujarati students find themselves in a big challenge of trying to cope with Gujarati speaking students. Bilingual Professors help international students by explaining the concepts twice by code switching from

Gujarati to English; some arrange special classes for international students, this is aimed at making international students catch up. International students sometimes seek help from fellow students who can speak English.

There are students coming from the countries neighboring India who can speak Hindi. They come from Afghanistan, Fiji Island, Bangladesh, Nepal and others. To them, the linguistic situation is friendlier as there are Hindi speakers in Gujarat and there are many words in Gujarati which are shared with Hindi. It is easy for them to communicate, get assistance and enjoy educational services. In general, the students coming from the neighboring countries are likely to benefit from studies in Gujarat and India as whole because most of the languages of the neighboring countries belong to Indo-Aryan group of languages and are related to Sanskrit. 61 percent of international students who were requested to recommend on the multilingual situation in education suggested improvement in English language use during lectures. 39 percent were comfortable with the situation. From analysis, most 39 percent respondents are from the neighboring Hindi speaking countries.



**Figure 1:** Comfortability of International students in the Medium of Instruction

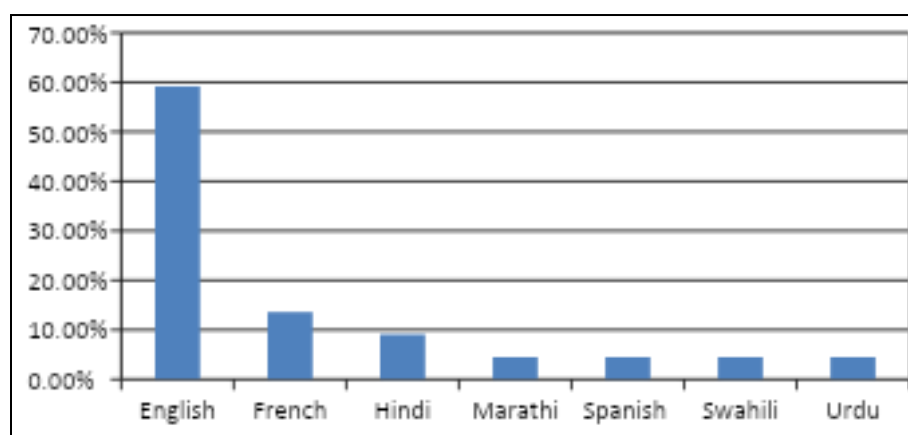
As the theory suggests using students' first language in teaching, the local students in Gujarat are treated in line with the model. The universities need to address the challenge faced by international students by recruiting more teaching and non teaching staff who can speak English. This has to be done as long as international students are accepted in the universities. The other method of combating this linguistic challenge is to introduce Hindi classes to help students communicate with teaching and non teaching staff who can't speak English. Hindi is suggested because almost all people in Gujarat understand Hindi and Hindi can be used all across India.

### *5.2 The Place of Hindi in Gujarat*

The study also wanted to know the status of Hindi in Gujarat state. According to Gujarat respondents, back then, only educated people of Gujarat spoke Hindi, those who were not advantaged used Gujarati. Hindi is superior to Gujarati because it has speakers in Gujarat state and many other parts of India and it is declared the national official language. In urban areas people speak, understand and write Hindi. In rural areas people understand Hindi but they cannot speak the language fluently. According to the Indian constitution Hindi is the official language of India. Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmir, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu are state languages. It may be challenging for a non-Indian to learn Hindi in the state Gujarat because most of the people of Gujarat speak

Gujarati language. One has to be clear as to which language to learn. If the learning takes place from daily social interaction, one has to be careful of the vocabulary learned ie whether they are Hindi or Gujarati. If you are not careful you may be taught Gujarati words thinking they are Hindi. There are some shared words in the two languages however.

Education and Services are provided largely in Gujarati language but one who can speak Hindi will easily access services. The people of Gujarat consider Hindi as the language of other states. Gujarati language is the first language to the people of Gujarat, when they were needed to mention the other language they would like to learn apart from it, 59 % of them chose English.13% French, 9% Hindi, 5% Marathi, 5% Spanish, 5% Swahili and 5% Urdu. This indicates that many prefer the English language. Since Hindi emerged, this means even those who speak Gujarati language only have English as their second language choice and not Hindi. This is likely because of the power of English in facilitating grabbing of opportunities all over the world.



**Figure 2:** Preference of the Language to Learn

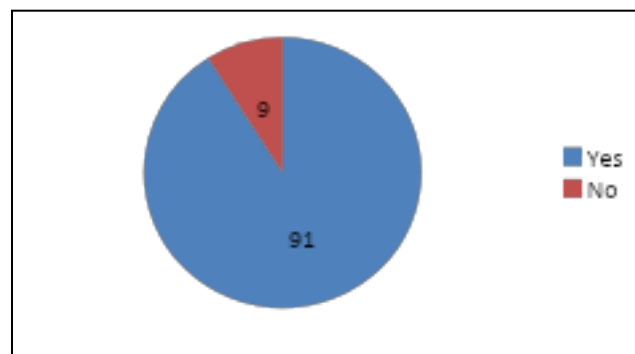
The only African language that cropped up when respondents were needed to mention the other language they would like to learn apart from Gujarati was Swahili. This might be a result of the long history between Gujarati and Swahili. There are many Swahili terms derived from Gujarati and Kutchi languages like *stafeli*, *gunia*, *chai*, *godoro*, *kachumbhari*, *dukani* and *baniani*. Gujarat families have settled in Zanzibar and other parts of east Africa for years.

53% of respondents who were requested to give their opinion on the language which grows quickly in Gujarat apart from Gujarati language said English is growing quickly. Despite Hindi being the national language, the people of Gujarat do not choose Hindi to be used as the medium of instruction. While responding to the question; will you be happy if Hindi language becomes a medium of instruction at all educational levels in Gujarat? 52 % of the respondents said “no” and 48 % said “yes”. From intuitive learning and careful observation by the researcher, even the 48 % of responses might have been influenced by Indian patriotism and not the reality which clearly indicates that English is more influential.



**Figure 3:** *Opinions on Hindi Becoming a Medium of Instruction in Gujarat state*

The power of English seems to attract many to choosing it as a medium of instruction. These responses show that students, parents and the society at large will choose the language that assures them or their children of the chance to grab the opportunities in the world. The people of Gujarat are patriotic but the influence of English in the world of economy pushes them to choose English as a medium of instruction and not Hindi. These responses are reflected by the way 2020 new educational policy (NEP) is written. The policy in Gujarat is found written in Gujarati and English languages only. The researcher did not see any Hindi version of it. The study also elicited respondents' views on bilingual education in Gujarat. Most of the respondents agreed that bilingual education in Gujarat is helpful. 91% of the respondents said 'Yes' to bilingual education.



**Figure 4:** *Opinions on Bilingual Education in Gujarat*

The bilingual education meant by the people of Gujarat is that of Gujarati and English. Outside India, Hindi is well known to be the language of the Indians. Visitors of India who wish to learn Hindi have to know that there are state languages. In states where the state language is not Hindi, you need to look for a Hindi speaking person to have a smooth learning of Hindi. For the sake of Gujarat state fortunately Gujarati and Hindi are languages close to each other, there are many shared words and it is therefore easy to learn Hindi in Gujarat.

## 6. Conclusion and Suggestion

Gujarat multiculturalism is revealed in multilingualism. Students from different nations are joining different educational institutions. Most of the students join for bachelor degree, masters, and PhD. Any international student is likely to be disappointed to realize that professors use the local language (Gujarati) for international courses. Multiculturalism is together with



multilingualism that is aimed at supporting students from other nations to acquire the education they need smoothly.

It is suggested that more efforts should be invested in improving the use of English language for international and local students in tertiary education. It is vital for universities to strengthen Gujarati- English and Hindi- English bilingualism. This will benefit both Indian youths wishing to grab opportunities abroad and international students joining the educational institutions in Gujarat and India at large

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## Language Issue in Primary Education in Tribal Communities: A Case Study from West Bengal

*Sujoy Sarkar<sup>1</sup>*  
*CIIL, Mysuru*

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### ABSTRACT

Maintaining quality education for underprivileged tribal children is a necessity for the holistic development of a nation. Although the government of India's policies are inclusive, the situation of primary education in tribal areas raises many questions about our government's convictions to fulfil the commitment. In addition to several other issues, language use in primary education complicates the teaching-learning situation for most tribal children. In West Bengal, Bengali is the sole medium of instruction (henceforth MoI). Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, and Rajbanshi also find a place in school education as MoI. Santali is the only tribal language in West Bengal used as MoI.

This paper explores the language issue in two forest village schools' classrooms in Fokadanga, Alipurduar district, West Bengal. In both schools, more than 90 per cent of students are from the Rabha community. Participant observation, classroom observation, and interaction with the teachers and students were the methods used to understand the actual teaching-learning situation, as well as the gap between commitment by the government and the exact picture in both schools. Thus, this paper presents how the Bengali medium schools pose a most challenging phase for the Rabha children at the early stage of education.

### 1. Introduction

Mother tongue education is crucial for children's cognitive development (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Cummins, 2000; Baker, 2000; Bialystok, 2001). In addition to fostering cognitive growth, mother tongue education ensures the children's language rights and the tribal community's cultural identity are protected (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Furthermore, mother tongue education helps to develop both the native language and the children's abilities in the majority language used in schools (Cummins, 2000). However, mother tongue education is often ignored in the school education system. In a country like India, with vast linguistic diversity, it is a mammoth task to implement mother tongue education for all. The 2011 census reported 22 scheduled and 99 non-scheduled languages; 272 mother tongues are reported under these scheduled and non-scheduled languages. However, only 43 languages are used as MoI in school education in India.

Keeping the importance of the mother tongue in mind, the education policy (1968) highlighted the importance of mother tongue education. The National Policy on Education (1986) and Programme of Action (PoA 1992) acknowledged the linguistic diversity in India and advocated for mother tongue education in tribal areas. The National Curriculum Framework

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [sujoy.jnu@gmail.com](mailto:sujoy.jnu@gmail.com)

(NCF2005) pointed out that home language should be the MoI. In the same line, the Right to Education Act (RTE 2009) stated, “*Medium of instruction shall, as far as practicable, in child’s mother tongue*” (29.2.f). This act also mentioned active learning (29.2.d) in a child-friendly and child-centred manner. The Constitution of India (Article- 14, 15, 29, 30, 275(1), 350, 350A, 350B) laid the path to implementing mother tongue education for all. These policies are on paper, and their implementation is often mismatched in primary education for tribal children.

Several research works in the past have highlighted language issues in tribal areas. Mohanty (2009) pointed out, “*Education failure of linguistic minorities all over the world is primarily related to the mismatch between the home language and the language of formal instruction*”. Srivastava et al. (1971, cited in Biswal & Mohanty, 2009) studied the education problem among Saoras in Orissa in the 1970s. They registered in their findings that the main reason for the educational backwardness and comparatively inferior educational performance of Saoras was that they were taught in Oriya and not in their mother tongue. Ambashat (1970) mentioned in his research that in the schools of the Ranchi district, the students did not like the non-tribal teachers as the teachers could not speak their language. Pattanayak (1981) observes, “Where multiple languages and cultures co-exist, the notion of one dominant language as the medium of instruction leaves thousands illiterate in their mother tongue and fosters low achievement level in the dominant language itself.” Sridhar (1996) mentioned in his work that the real problem is the choice of medium of instruction for the minorities who speak one of the unrecognised, predominantly tribal languages or other languages.

While policies supporting mother tongue education have been established, numerous studies highlight the significant challenges in their implementation. The gap between policy intentions and actual practice remains wide in the context of tribal education, especially in the State like West Bengal. Although the State has recognised 40 communities as scheduled tribes, only Santali-speaking students benefit from formal mother tongue education. Furthermore, even in Santali-dominated areas, the availability of Santali schools is limited and sometimes absent. This gap between policy and practice is evident when we turn to the Rabha community, another tribal group in West Bengal. Unlike the Santali-speaking population, Rabha children have no access to education in their mother tongue. The absence of educational facilities in the Rabha language creates a significant barrier to their academic success and cultural preservation.

This study focuses on the MoI issue and the educational challenges the Rabha children faced in two schools in Poro Forest Village. Through this exploration, the paper highlights the broader issue of tribal education in West Bengal. This paper seeks to offer a clear understanding of the impact of language policy gaps on the educational outcomes of marginalised communities.

## **2. Education in West Bengal**

The Government of West Bengal has made much effort to provide education for all. However, the State’s major language, Bengali, dominates the school education system. Despite the language and cultural diversity, there is no such policy in West Bengal which advocates mother tongue education for tribal communities. Hence, education in the local language, mainly in tribal areas, is often neglected. Meanwhile, the neighbouring states Odisha and Jharkhand have initiated mother education for tribal children.

Bengali and English are the primary official languages of West Bengal, along with other additional official languages- Nepali, Urdu, Santali, Punjabi, Telugu, Odia, Hindi, Ranjbanshi, Kamtapuri, and Kurmali. Apart from Bengali medium schools, the state government supports Hindi, Nepali, Santali (Olchiki), and Urdu medium schools. Recently, the West Bengal Government initiated Ranjbanshi and Kamtapuri Medium School. The total tribal population in West Bengal is 4,406,794, which is 5.5 per cent of the total population of India. Most tribal children do not speak Bengali in their early stages of primary education. These communities speak some of the tribal languages of India, like Oraon, Rabha, Toto, Mech, and many other languages. Children from these tribal communities are mostly left with Bengali medium education. The tribal languages are different from Bengali in many linguistic aspects. Only one tribal language, i.e. Santali, is used as a medium of instruction in Bengal. Many education policies of the country, the constitution of India, and international declarations guide the State in providing mother tongue education to all children. Mother tongue education scope is limited for a few communities in West Bengal. Despite the widespread acknowledgement of the importance of the mother tongue in education, the West Bengal Government has yet to address the language issues in primary schools in tribal areas. In 2021-2022, the West Bengal Government took measures to include Kamtapuri and Rajbanshi in the school education system in North Bengal. This inclusion came after the long struggle of the Rajbanshi and Kamtapuri communities. The central policies, framework, and RTE 2009 and NEP 2020 guide the education system of West Bengal. The West Bengal Urban Primary Education Act (1963) and the West Bengal Primary Education Act (1973), framed by the West Bengal government, did not mention mother tongue education. The Acts primarily dealt with administrative matters. The State Education Policy (2023) did not offer anything promising for the tribal communities of West Bengal. The issue of the language rights for tribal children has remained silent till date in West Bengal. This differential treatment towards the mother tongues of the tribal communities and the existing linguistic inequality has the deadly potential of becoming a linguicide soon (kangas & Philipson, 1996). To highlight these issues, this paper examines the education situation in two forest village schools in West Bengal.

### **3. The Rabha Community**

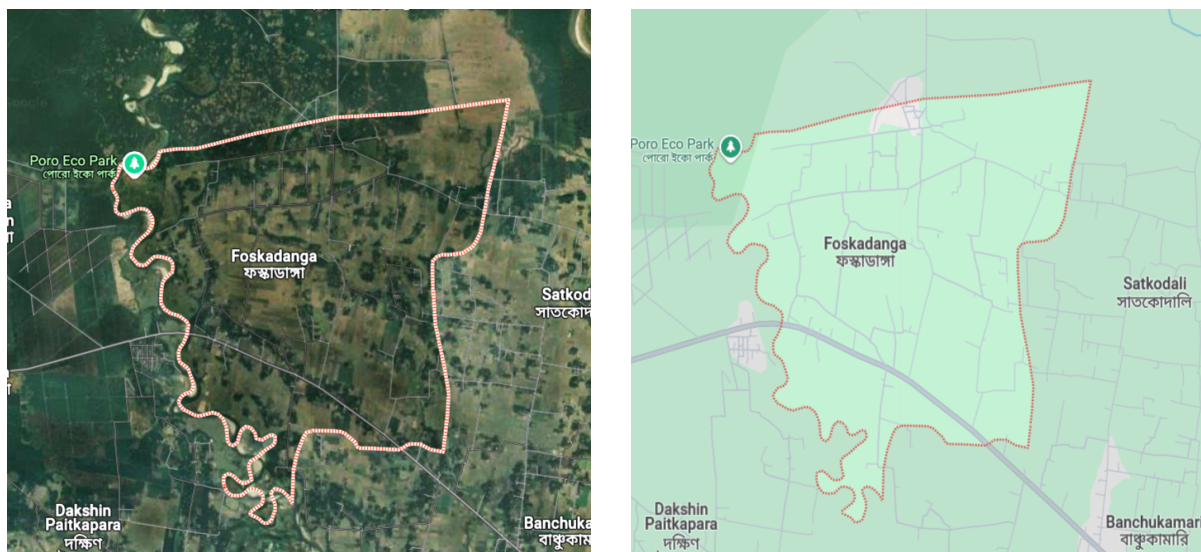
The Rabhas are one of 40 notified Scheduled Tribes of West Bengal. The Rabhas are classified as an Indo-Mongoloid group. According to Dalton (1872), Rabhas are a branch of the Kachari group. In *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, Dalton mentioned, “The Rabhas and Hajongs of Goalpara District are also branches of the Kacharis race, and connected with the Garos” (p.87). Gait (1981) in the report on the census of Assam 1891, Vol.1 Part II, Chapter. X has mentioned that there is uncertainty about the origin of the Rabhas. Rabhas are mainly located in Assam, Meghalaya and West Bengal. In Assam, Rabhas are primarily found in Goalpara, Kamrup, Darang, and the Garo Hills. As per the 2011 census, the Rabha population in Assam is 2,96,189 and in West Bengal 27820. In West Bengal, the Rabhas mainly reside in Alipurduar, Cooch Behar, and Jalpaiguri districts. As per the 2011 Census of India, the total Rabha population in Jalpaiguri district is 14487, Cooch Behar – 3801, and Uttar Dinajpur- is 5199. The concentration of the Rabha population is high in the present Alipurduar District. Until 2014, Alipurduar was a Subdivision of Jalpaiguri District. The Jalpaiguri District Census Handbook (1961) mentioned that “Every 9 out of 10 Rabha tribes are found to live in the Alipurduars subdivision” (p.82). In North Bengal, Rabhas also mentioned themselves as Koch, Kocha or Koch-Rabha. As per Bhattacharya (2019, p.66), Rabhas in West Bengal belong to the Pati-Rabha and Koch-Rabha.

The language spoken by the Rabhas is known as the Rabha language, which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family. Chatterji (1951, p.15) grouped the Rabha language under the Bodo (Boro) group of languages. Rabha language in North Bengal is also called 'Koch crow'.

The Rabhas are mainly dependent on agriculture. In the hills, they used to practice shifting cultivation. To date, Rabhas are primarily dependent on agriculture in the plain. Spinning and weaving are some of the other common occupational activities of the community members. Present-day Rabhas are efficient in spinning and weaving; but the intensity is reduced. Once, hunting used to play a crucial role in their economy. However, traditional hunting has declined in tribal communities after the implementation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972. The Rabhas in West Bengal today mainly depend on agriculture. Many of them are agriculture labourers. Due to the modern education facilities, few are employed in government today. In North Bengal, a large number of Rabhas reside in forest villages. Some of the community members are employed as forest labourers. Forest labourers are also partially dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. Agriculture is the primary economic pursuit of the Rabhas living outside the forest areas.

#### 4. Study Area

Rabhas of Alipurduar District and Cooch Behar District can be divided into two parts from an ecological point of view (Das & Raha 1967). One is those living in the villages where agriculture is the significant subsistence activity, and two are those living in forest villages or Reserve Forest bastis and employed as forest labourers by the Department of Forest. The schools studied are in the Foskopadanga village, and most students are from Foskopadanga. In Foskopadanga village, Rabhas are the major community. However, people from other communities are also there. The houses of the Rabha community are in the part of the village where no population from other communities stay. The village and school areas are shown on the map below.



**Figure 1:** Foskopadanga Village. satellite image (left) and Terrain image (right)

The Poru River flanks Foskopadanga village on one side and the forest on the other three sides. The national highway is not far away from the village. As per the 2011 Census Village

level data, most of the Rabha population of Foskopadanga are engaged in agriculture as cultivators or labourers. More than fifty per cent of the population is involved with agriculture as their primary or marginal work. Some of them are engaged in household industries. Rabhas are efficient in making wood and bamboo crafts and household items. They also fish for their sustenance. A few of the villagers are also involved with Poro Eco Park Management. It is a popular picnic spot for nearby people. So, some Rabha people occasionally use eco-park management as a source of partial income. The park is another place where children have a chance to be exposed to the Bengali language.

## **5. Research Design**

The primary aim of this study was to explore classroom dynamics and language issues in two forest village schools, focusing on the medium of instruction, teaching methods, materials used, teachers' approach to learners, learners' responses and participation, and the language used in the classroom and on the playground. Special attention was given to interactions among inter- and intra-community students and teachers.

This study focused on

- 1) Poro Forest Village School and
- 2) Poro Forest Village Junior High School.

Classroom observations were conducted from June to July 2015, supplemented by occasional visits to Foskopadanga village. The research relied solely on qualitative data, including school observations and interviews with students and teachers.

The research primarily employed participatory observation to understand the language context within the community, classroom observation to examine interactions between teachers and students, and semi-structured interviews with both teachers and former students. These interviews centred on topics such as the textbook, medium of instruction, teachers' training, and the language-related challenges faced in the classroom.

A limitation of the study was my inability to learn the Rabha language, which hindered direct communication with the students. As a result, I addressed language challenges faced by students by discussing them with former students who shared their experiences of studying in Bengali-medium primary schools.

## **6. Language in Scenario in Rabha Village & Schools**

Rabha is the sole home language of the Foskopadanga village. In West Bengal, Rabhas are primarily in contact with the Rajbanshi and Bengali-speaking communities. Rajbongshi and Bengali speakers occupy superior positions in social strata (Das & Raha 1968, *p. 1*). For example, most teachers and local block-level government workers belong to Rajbanshi and Bengali. Though other language communities surround the Rabha community, the Rabha children do not interact with other language speakers daily or on the playground until they enrol in school. Thus, the children are exposed only to the Rabha language in their early childhood. Since the home language is Rabha, the elders can speak Bengali and do not interact with the younger generation in Bengali. The Rabha children in the early school stages can hardly communicate in Bengali.

The Poro Forest Village Primary School was established in 1955 and is one of the earliest primary schools in this area. According to the available School Report Card (NUEPA), 2015-16 reported enrolment & repeaters in Grade I- 21, Grade II- 20, Grade III-25, and Grade IV- 30; a total of 96 in Poro F.V Primary School. In Forest Village Jr. High School, enrolment & repeaters are in Grade V- 32 and Grade VI- 10. All the students in both schools are from the scheduled tribe community. A few students in each class belong to the Oraon community, which is also an Adivasi community, and the rest belong to the Rabha community.

There are only five teachers available at the Poro Forest Village Primary School. Four male teachers belong to the Bengali language community. One female teacher who is the Head of the school was from the Oraon community. The Poro Forest Village Junior High School was established in 2011. Only two female Bengali teachers were there. The teachers were not equipped with the Rabha language. However, a few teachers picked up limited Rabha words over time. The sole MoI is Bengali. More than ninety per cent of students in both schools are from Rabha Community. The students communicate in the Rabha language with their classmates and peers. As both schools share the same playground, the language used in the playground is also Rabha. A significant linguistic disconnect thus marks the school experience of the Rabha students, as their education is in Bengali medium, and they have teachers who are unfamiliar with Rabha language. The linguistic situation in schools contrasts sharply with children's predominantly Rabha-speaking home and peer interactions.

#### **7. Classroom Observation in Poro F. V. Primary School & Forest Village Jr. High School**

The education for grades I-IV is covered in Poro Forest Village Primary School. Primary school is the first formal setup where Rabha children are exposed to the Bengali language. The teaching and learning at Poro Forest Village School happens in Bengali language. The Rabha children are not accustomed to the Bengali language, so it is difficult for the students to understand. The classroom situation worsens as the teacher can not communicate with schoolchildren in Rabha. The bond between the students and teachers could not build because of the language issue. Usually, the teachers read out from the textbook, and students repeat the same. Alternatively, whatever letter or words the teacher writes on the blackboard, students will try to write the same in the notebook. The students usually memorise the rhymes from the textbook. However, they face difficulties explaining when asked about any meaning of the Bengali word. In Grades I & II, the teaching-learning is mostly one-sided. They either replied in Rabha language or kept silent if the teacher asked them something. Even while leaving the classroom, the children asked permission in the Rabha language. However, in Grades III & IV, the Rabha children could pick up simple Bengali words. However, they faced difficulties while conversing with the teachers. There are several examples from the classroom like this. In junior high school, students are expected to perform better in Bengali. Let us see the situation of the Poro Forest Village Jr. High School.

In the case of grades IV & V, while interacting with teachers, the students spoke to them in broken Bengali and sometimes did not understand what the teachers said to them in Bengali. Students resorted to the Rabha language in school most of the time. Most of the time, students also replied to questions in Rabha during class. Bengali is different from the Rabha language. Both languages are from other language families. The textbooks are written in standard Bengali, which differs from the spoken form of Bengali spoken in this area. As mentioned above, the medium of instruction is Bengali. The textbooks are written in Bengali, and classes are taught in Bengali. The teaching process is conventional, as with most classroom practices. Usually,

teachers read from a book, and students repeat the same. If the class teacher asked any question, most students remained silent. The students' silence can be observed in the classroom transcript below. The teaching session was on the exercise part of the Class V Bengali textbook (p.85-89) from the Short Tale- *Boka Kumirer Kotha (Tale of Foolish Crocodile)*, written by Upendra Kishore Roy Chaudhary. Before reporting the classroom transcript, let's get familiar with the story of a crocodile and a fox. Both of them planned to farm together. In the first season, they cultivated potatoes. The foolish crocodile did not know the potatoes grow under the soil. The crocodile thought potato is the plant's fruit, so the crocodile decided to take the plant's upper part. However, the crocodile later realised the loss after returning home with the leaves. Next season, they cultivated paddy, and the crocodile decided to take the root part, considering the previous mistake. Alas! Crocodiles lost their crops again. The following season, they cultivated sugarcane, and the crocodile chose to take the sugarcane's leaves, which is not of any use. Finally, the crocodile said he was no longer interested in cultivating with the fox.

In the following classroom transcript, the teacher covered only the exercise part of the *Tale of Foolish Crocodile*.

The class started with an attendance call. Then, the teacher instructed the students to open the *Tale of Foolish Crocodile* lessons exercise section, question number 4- *Fill in the Blanks*. However, it is important to note that this tale was finished during the previous class hours and was mainly read and narrated by the teacher. The exercise activities happened as follows:

Teacher: Accha dekho tahole tomra shunyo sthan gulo kore nao.

*(Ok. So, finish the fill in the blanks)*

Potteke khatai kore nao. *(All of you do it on the notebook)*

Hya thik ache? *(Alright)*

Thale pothom ek nombor ta dekho. *(First, check the number one question)*

Kara kara chash korte giyechilo? *(Who all went to cultivate)*

Keke chash korte giyechilo? *(Who all went to cultivate)*

The students replied to the teacher 'tik ache' (ok).

Q1. Ek nombor shunyo sthan hobe ki?

*(What is the answer to first fill in the blanks?)*

The teacher did not get any reply. The students were silent. So, in the following line, the teacher explained the answer.

Kumir ar shiyal mile chash korte gelo. Thik ahee?

*(Crocodile and Fox went for cultivation together. OK?)*

Q2. Dui nombor shunyo sthan dekho.

*(Check the 2<sup>nd</sup> number fill in the blanks)*



She bhablo bujhi alu hoy tar gacher \_\_\_\_\_. ki? Alu hoy tar gacher \_\_\_\_?

The answer is *gacher phol*. Gach- tree/plant, Phol- fruit. The teacher was expecting the students to answer *gacher phol*. As the teacher did not get any response, he repeated the question as in the following line.

She bhablo alu hoy tar gacher dash \_\_\_\_ gacher?

*(he thought potato is tree's \_\_\_\_)*

Phol. *(Fruit. The answer to this fill in the blanks)*

Ki bhablo? *(What he thought?)*

Kumir bhablo alu hoy tar gacher phol. Thik achee?

*(Crocodile thought potato is the fruit of the tree. Alright?)*

Eta likhe nao.

*(Write this)*

The teacher's sincere effort is visible from the above question (Q2). The teacher tired to explain the question part by part and answered. In the following questions, the teacher continued this effort.

Q3. Tarpur teen nambar shunyo sthan dekho.

*(Net Check the 3<sup>rd</sup> number fill in the blanks)*

Shiyal ki korlo bolotoo? *(What did the fox do?)*

Shiyal se {sei} dhan shuddho gacher dash \_\_\_\_ kete niye gelo.

*(Fox)*

Ki kete niye gelo? *(What did fox take)*

Dhan suddho gacher aga kete niye gelo.

*(Along with Paddy, the fox cut the top part of the plant and took)*

Dhan suddho gacher ki kete niye gelo?

*(What did Fox cut along with Paddy?)*

Aga. *(top part of the plant or tree)*

*Thik achee? (Ok?)*

Q4. Accha, ebar dekho *(ok, now see/check)*

Shebar holo dasher \_\_\_\_ chash. *(That time {they} did \_\_\_\_ cultivation)*

Sebar holo \_\_\_\_ *(kiser) chash boloto? aa? kisher chash?*

*(That season, what did they cultivate? Aa... what cultivation?)*

Shebar holo ankher chash. *(That season they cultivated/planted sugarcane)*

*tar mane hocche titio bar holo akher chash. (That means the third time they cultivated sugarcane)*

After the Q4 answer, the teacher reminded the students of the first cultivation (potato) and the second cultivation (paddy). Then, the teacher continued with the last question. In every question, the teacher first simplified the question in different ways. Then, the teacher asked the students to answer. The teacher solved the question once the students failed to respond. The same happened throughout the session. Once the teacher solved the fill in the blanks, she instructed the students to note the answer “Eta likhe nao.” (*Write this*)). Every attempt to rephrase the fill in the blanks failed to elicit the correct answer from students.

In the present classroom transcript, the teacher instructed the students to solve the gap in their notebook. At the end of the class, the teacher goes on to reconfirm:

Teacher: “Potteke khatai kore nao.” (*All of you do it on the notebook*)

Students: hya thik ache (*Alright*)”

The Poro FV Junior High School’s classroom activity reveals a significant gap created by the language barrier between teaching and learning. Instruction is exclusively in Bengali, a language different from the student’s mother tongue, Rabha. This disconnect causes students to struggle with understanding and responding to the teacher, who often receives no answers to her questions, leading her to rephrase and eventually provide the answers herself. The lesson from the Class V Bengali textbook “*Boka Kumirer Kotha*” exemplifies this issue. Despite repeated prompts and simplifications from the teacher, students could not fill in the blanks in the exercise section. The conventional teaching method, where the teacher reads, and students repeat, is ineffective due to this language gap.

Consequently, the student’s reliance on Rabha and limited comprehension of Bengali slows their learning, demonstrating the urgent need to address the language barrier to improve educational outcomes. The classroom could have been more engaging and effective if the teacher had been equipped with the students’ mother tongue. The next section of the paper presents interviews with teachers discussing their strategies to understand and compensate for this language barrier and their views on long-term solutions.

## **8. Teachers’ View on Mother Tongue Education**

The classroom observation can give limited information. Hence, teacher experience is another critical way to know the reality in the classroom. Three teachers from the Poro Forest Village Primary schools were interviewed. In the early stage, the language issue is more prominent, which is the motivation for presenting only the primary school teachers’ opinions. The language issues in the classroom, textbook issues, school & home language & environment, and other related issues were discussed. All the teachers are from the Bengali community. The teacher acknowledged that they cannot speak and understand the Rabha language. They have learned some Rabha words from the students. They agreed that the language gap is a significant barrier in the teaching-learning process. It is difficult for teachers to teach in the early grades as students mostly remain silent and hardly understand Bengali. Part of the hour-long discussion is present here.

Researcher: sikkhay bhasha niye apnar ki motamot.

*(What is your opinion on language issues in education?)*

Teacher 1: sikkhay bhasha ekta boro factor, madhyam. Mane je khetre communication korte gele language ta jeta matri-bhasha madhyame shikha seta prathomik stare ba nimnno prathamik stare khubi guruttopurno jinis. Ei shikha ke purnota ante gele matri bhashar madhyame sikkhata khubi dorkar. Amra chotobela thekei matri bhashar shikha ta mane shikha grohon korchhi korchhi. Jar janna shikhatake nite giye onek somossa thaka kalin o onek kotin jiniske sohoje ayotto korte perechi. Jehetu matri bhasar madhyame amra shikkha niyechi kintu jekhane ese jader shikkha dicchi taderke Bengali ekta second language, English ekta third language. Actually, tader matri bhasha rabha. Ei Rabha bhasar jehetu kono lipi nei, Bengali bhashar sathe kono somporko nei. As because oder path daner khetre khubi osubidha hoy. Tao chaliye jachi r ki. Je rokomar joto sombhob hoy. Bastob udahoron, dharona diye sikhadicchi. Eta ektao subidha hoy.

*(Language is one of the significant factors in education. At the primary and pre-primary levels, education through the mother tongue or language of communication in school is crucial. To make a holistic education system, the mother tongue is a must. Since childhood, we (Bengali) have received our education in our mother tongue. So, despite many other problems, we could learn many complex concepts quickly. After coming here, I realised that Bengali is their second language and English is their third language. The students' mother tongue is Rabha. There is no script in Rabha and no relation to the Bengali language, so it is challenging to teach the students. However, we are managing by giving examples from daily life as much as possible. The problem is still there.)*

Researcher: Sir, ei forest village school chattro der pichiye thakar janna Jodi kichu karon apnake deoya hoy tar moddhe annatamo karon apni ki mone koren.

*(Sir, what would be the significant obstacles for the students in this area?)*

T2 : mane pichiye thaka bolte sikhar khetre

*(Do you mean disadvantageous position in education?)*

Researcher: ha, ha, sikhar khetre

*(Yes, yes in education)*

T2 : prothomot ekta sishu janmanur por tar ma, babar abong pori barer kach theke sikha-orjon kore. Sikhalav ta tar poribarar kach thekei hoy. Porobortite tar ashe-pashe je pariparshik samajik obostha ebong culture, tar modhe probhab fele. Se jokhoni ektu boro hoy, panch bochor choy bochorer hoy tokhon se school ase. To, school asahar por prothom je somoshya tar se sommukkhin hoy, ontato to amader ei elakay, ei ongshe seta hocche bhashagoto somoshya. Se tar poribar ebong hmm para bola jete pare, tar ashe-pasher bari ebong jei ongshe se pach choy bochor choto theke ei boro holo. Ei समय kaler modhye se je bhasay niye kothabarta bolllo, je bhashar sathe se jukto chilo, se ekta natun bhasar sommukhin holo.

*(Firstly, the children learn a language from their parents and family. The surroundings and culture also influence language learning. When the children turn 5 or 6, they enter school. After entering school, the first problem they face, at least in our area, is the language issue. For the first five to six years, the children spend time with family and neighbours speaking one language. In school, children are introduced to a new language.)*

Ebhabe Jodi dekha jay tokhon se amra jokhon communication, amra jokhon bhujanur chesta korchi. Hoyto amra jehetu rabha bhasay dokkhho noi, purapuri amra Rabha bhasate ekhono bhuje utte parini tay amra bhanga-bhanga bhabe Rabha bhasha bebohar korle, tara kintu purapuri bhabe ayotto korte parchena.

*(As we are not proficient and cannot fully understand the Rabha language, we have to use some word/phrase form of the Rabha language. (The teachers use some words they picked up from the school students). So, while we try to communicate or try to make them understand something, we fail, and the children also cannot understand)*

Ei bhasa goto somosshar janna amader ei bishoy ta nite osubidha hocche. Puthigoto je bishoybostu gulu ache se guli bhujte onekta somoy lege jache. Dhire-dhire somoyer sathe sathe kichuta tara bhujte parleo dekha jache anna jara jader Prothom matri bhasa Bengali, jara hindi-bhasi tader hindi school ache. Jara nepali tader janna nepali school ache. Tara prothome giyei bishoyta ayotto korte pereche. Ei ongshe jara sadri hok ba rabha hok tader prothomei asar por ei bishoy ta aytto korte ek dui bochor lege jay orthat je sikha class two je orjon korar kotha, se bishoy bastu bhujar khomota tar class two chole asar kotha, se bhujte-bhujte class four hoye jay. Ebong pariparshik je bishoybastu ba tader samajik obostha setao ekta karon hoye giye daray. seta to mane onek boro karon ache. Tader sikhak tader se maner na pouchanur onek karon ache. Prothom onshe je somoshya ta amader samne phute ute seta holo bhasa.

*(Because of the language issue, teaching the subjects from textbooks takes time. They learn at a very low pace. For Bengali, Nepali, and Hindi children, schools are there in their mother tongue medium. Right from the initial stage, they can learn quickly. For the Sadri or Rabha children, in this area, it takes four years (Class four) to learn or understand what they are supposed to understand by Class I or II. There are many reasons for these children's poor educational situation. However, the first reason we can see is the language issue.)*

Teacher 3: bhasha ta syllabus er aotao ana ba oi bhasha-bhasi kono shikhita chele-meyeke se pura chakri paoyar beboztha, se bhabe Jodi na hoy..anna kono ...je part time jeno sei connection toiri hoy. Erom Bengali medium school acche jekhane Hindi ekta subject rakha hoy. Tar janna hindi teacher, je bhalo Hindi jane, bhuje, jar dokhotta ache take diye paranu hocche. ...ekta must ei elakay sei seikalkar manus ke Rabha path-daner janna ekta subject jodi government ney. Se janna ami Bengali medium school je sob ongshe Rabha janajati manus besi ache, sekhankar ekta subject rakhlam rabha.

*(The Rabha language can be included in the syllabus. If not, at least the educated young can be employed part-time in a school. Many Bengali medium schools offer Hindi as one of the options in school. Hindi teachers are engaged. In the same line*

*where Rabha populations are more in these areas, Rabha can be taught as a subject.)*

The school teachers opined that they had experienced language issues in Poro FV Primary School as they could not communicate and understand Rabha language. Recruiting educated Rabhas as part-time teachers can be beneficial in bridging the language gap in school (T3). One of the teachers highlighted that the home language and local environment are crucial factors for primary school education. Usually, school students only spend 3-4 hours in early stage of primary education in the classroom. They spend most of their time with family members and neighbours who speak only Rabha. Hence, it is difficult for the Rabha children to understand Bengali Language. All the teachers also asserted that learning Bengali is important for further studies. However, the mother tongue is crucial in the early stage of education. It should be acknowledged that several teachers in tribal areas put much effort into teaching the students. Many teachers come up with their own teaching styles to teach the students. One teacher's effort from Poro FV Primary School is worth mentioning here.

Teacher: kalke jemon ami poraichi, dekben amar class e kichu drawing kora ache. Kichu mane bhujtechena, ami bhujte chi. Siyal mane ki.

*(Yesterday I was teaching in my class. You can see there are some drawings on the blackboard. I realised the students had not understood what 'fox' means. (siyal)).*

Kichu bhujtechena. 'choto nodi', 'nodi' bujtechena, 'hatu jol', 'hatu' kathata. Ei bar ekta line kore porachi tar theke je kono ekta chobi aklam. Amar class gele, class one gele bhujben, chobi gula ekhon boarde ache. ha, prottekta kobitar modhye special kichu word, chobi enke oder bhujanu jay, o accha. siyal, siyaler chobi akte lagbe. O ora ki bhashay o ki jane bollo

*(In the rhyme, the student did not understand the meaning of choto nodi (small river), and hatu jol (knee depth water/ water till knee). Then, I started teaching line by line, picking a keyword and drawing it on the blackboard. You can see in the class I classroom, the pictures still there on the blackboard. In every poem, some unique words are there. If I draw a picture, the children understand the concept faster.)*

The discussion with the teachers highlights the significant language barrier in the classroom, which is challenging for students and teachers. The teachers are aware of the home language and school language gap. Being the first language at school, Bengali is a crucial challenge for the students. Most students struggled to comprehend lessons, remained silent, and took longer to grasp fundamental concepts. Students struggle to express their opinions or doubts to the teachers from the Bengali community.

On the other hand, teachers struggle to explain concepts in the Rabha language. It can also be pointed out that using daily life examples and visual aids, such as drawings on the blackboard, can help students understand new concepts and vocabulary. Teaching line by line and picking keywords to explain may aid in comprehension. Despite these efforts, learning remains slow, with students taking longer to reach expected educational milestones. Recruiting educated Rabha individuals as part-time instructors to facilitate better communication and understanding in the classroom may be a way out of this problem. The Rabha language may be included in the school syllabus as a subject, similar to the inclusion of Hindi in Bengali medium schools. The suggestion of inclusion of Rabha language & and Rabha part-time teachers in the

school system was discussed with passed-out students from Faskadanga schools. Their opinion follows similar views.

## 9. Graduated Students' Opinion

Due to the language barrier, it is difficult to interview the children in school about the home language and school language gap. One Sociology (Hons) student was interviewed about the language issue in school in the early stage. He completed primary schooling in Bengali medium primary education. Several issues of language and culture were discussed with him during the fieldwork. One snippet of the recorded discussion is as follows:

Student: to ekhon amar oikhane porashuna kore amar mone hocche, ei khankar bacchara eikhankar chele-pelera sob keno porasuna korte parchena, keno egote parchena. to eitar janna ami, jetuku amar mone hocche, to eikhankar baccha der porasunar khetre je somsyata... somsyata hoy seta holo language, mane bhasha. Mane era je bhasha niye porasuna kore seta hocche Bengali, school e je sob porasuna hoy se gula to Bengali-tei poranu hoy. Tader somsyata era jokhon porasuna kore to eder khetre je somsyata hoy tader hocche ise... ki bolbo bhasha. Tara tader schoole master moshay ra tara je bhabe Bengali bhasay taderke poray. To tader, mane tara se bhasha ta tiktak bhujte pare na. to teacher je taderke Bengali bhashay poracche, to tara Jodi sei bhasha tay tiktak bhujte na pare, to ei janna tader mane porashunar khetre tader bhujte somsyata hoy r ki.

*(After going outside for education, I can understand why the children from here cannot continue or progress in education. One of the problems children face here is language. The education is in Bengali. The teaching also happens through Bengali. The teachers use Bengali in a classroom where the children cannot understand it. If the students cannot understand the language in which teaching is happening, they will have difficulty understanding the lesson.)*

Researcher: rabha bhasay poraile ki era bhalo korte pare

*(Do you think the children will learn better if they are taught in Rabha)*

Student: ha... mane bhalo to abboysi korbe, kenona Bangla bhashay teacher-ra jokhon Bangla bhasay poray tokhon to tara bhujte pare na. to se jaygay Jodi rabha bhashay poranu hoy to tara to nischoi bhujte parbe. To ektu holeo to bhalo korbe. Ektuna Jodi rabha bhasay poranu hoy to amar mone hoy, onek tai bhalo hobe r ki.

*(Yes. Of course, students will do better. When the teachers teach in Bengali, the students cannot understand. The students will understand if the teaching happens through Rabha (he emphasises). They will perform better. They will perform far better.)*

The student's perspective underscores a significant language barrier in the classroom. According to his account, the core issue for students at the school is their inability to grasp lessons effectively due to the MoI at school. He points out that despite their efforts, students struggle because they are taught in a language they do not fully comprehend. The student reflected on his own experiences and observations, noting that this linguistic disconnect hinders the student's educational progress.

In the interview, he articulated a straightforward solution: instruction in Rabha, the students' native language, could significantly enhance their understanding and academic performance. He argues that if the teaching were conducted in Rabha, students would understand the material better and likely perform considerably better overall. This sentiment is corroborated by the teachers' earlier observations, which suggested that using Rabha in the classroom could address the existing language gaps. One more student who was pursuing History (Hons) in a college in Kolkata shared a similar opinion about the language issue in the classroom; part of the discussion was as follows:

Students: aste-aste dekhchi je mane amra je tuku porte parchi, se tuku manne bacchara se rokom mane kichu...mane bhashar janna kichu bhujte parchena. porche school jacce har asche kintu mane, okane giye teachera jei bhasay poracchen seita holo Bangla bhasha, sei bhasa ta kintu ei amader rabha, modesio, Adivasi bacchara sei bhashata sei rokom bhujte parchena. mane banan kore porte parleo, mane sei bhasha ta tik bhabe bhujte parchena tayeder porasunar khetre ektu asubidha hocche. Tay ami mone kori je Bangla bhasar sathe-sathe rabha bhasateo jodi ektu poranur bebosthata hoy tahole ektu bhalo hoy.

*(Slowly, I understood that the children could not understand much because of language, whatever we can read (Bengali). They are studying, going to school, and coming back. Nevertheless, in school, the teachers are using Bengali. The Rabha, Modeshio, and Adivasi children are not able to understand much. So, they face difficulties in education. So, I think along with Bengali, Rabha language may also be introduced at school for Rabha children. It will be better (for the Rabha children))*

This Graduate student expressed that the primary students hardly understood textbook language in the early stage. The student also pointed out that despite the students' best efforts, using Bangla in teaching is problematic for Rabha, Modeshio, and Adivasi children who do not fully comprehend it. The student emphasises that this language mismatch impedes students' understanding of the textbook material, affecting their overall educational experience. Her suggestion to include Rabha alongside Bengali in the curriculum reflects a practical solution to mitigating these challenges.

The insights from the interviews of students who passed out from Bengali medium suggested that addressing the language barrier is crucial for improving educational outcomes for tribal students. Incorporating the Rabha language into the curriculum and classroom practices alongside Bengali could bridge the existing language gap and enhance students' understanding and performance.

## 10. Conclusion

The MoI issue remains the central issue for school education in tribal areas in India. The classroom situation in the forest village schools reasserts the critical educational situation in tribal areas in West Bengal. The students' home language is Rabha. In contrast, the language used in school education is Bengali. Due to the language gap, the joyful situation in the classroom is often missed. The teaching seems to be one-sided. The students often failed to understand what the teacher taught in the classroom. It is observed that they could hardly answer any questions asked by the teachers. Even if they could understand, they could not reply as they were not fluent in Bengali. The graduate students also expressed the difficulties they faced in their school days. They had expressed that they could have performed better if Rabha language had been their MoI

in school. The State language, Bengali, is essential, as higher education is in Bengali. However, if the mother tongue and school language transition does not happen smoothly, it will not help the Rabha children in higher education. Students from Poro Forest Village School faced problems in higher education as their Bengali language skills did not develop like the rest of their peers who were fortunate enough to study in their mother tongue. If the Rabha Children had access to Rabha medium education, their Bengali language skills could have been improved, too. They could have performed better in higher education. Rabha school experience shows us that the language issue remains a significant challenge in improving the quality of education among tribal children to date. The West Bengal Government failed to address the language issue in education for the Tribal children. Mother tongue education not only ensures cognitive development but also ensures language rights and cultural identity (Skutnab-Kangas 2000). Ensuring mother tongue education is the responsibility of the state government. As an immediate measure, the State may require graduate students to be school teachers to help the Rabha children get a better education. It is high time the West Bengal government seriously considered the language issue in primary education, especially for the tribal communities. Lastly, the State should ensure that language rights are enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

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## Developing and Manoeuvring Effective Teaching of Writing Skills to Second Language Learners in the Indian Context

N. Ramesh<sup>1</sup>

University of Hyderabad

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### ABSTRACT

The present paper examines the impact of some helpful strategies for the development of writing abilities among second language learners. It refers to several practical instructional strategies that are used to help improve the writing abilities of second language learners. The study concentrates on several approaches of benchmarking, including brainstorming, writing fables, speed writing, loop writing, and short sagas. The findings of this study provide new insights for the employment of the right strategies to cultivate writing talents among second language learners. It observes that brainstorming is a strategy which is most useful for the target learners, having a constructive influence on the confidence, writing abilities, and understanding of the learners. On the other hand, narrative writing achieves moderate efficacy with a negative impact on variables. While learners' writing skills are not substantially affected by speed writing, loop writing has shown to be extremely useful in promoting better results. These findings highlight that it is important to select instructional strategies to encourage and engage second language learners in effective writing tasks. Finally, it argues that the development of writing abilities of second language learners may be improved by further investigating issues like individual preferences and modifying the instructional methods appropriately.

### 1. Introduction

Teaching the skills of writing English as a second language to Second Language Learners is a challenging task as it involves the application of several techniques and approaches that are usually determined based on the levels and grades of the learners as well as on the capacity of the learners to carry through these stages. It is not easy to instruct pupils in a second language as it is always an engaging endeavour due to the potential for personal growth it offers to the learners. According to earlier scholars (Freedman et al., 2014), the act of writing requires that learners are guided and taught how to construct coherent sentences in the target language with proper attention to spelling, grammatical structures and coherence in ideas in the second language. The phrase 'classroom tactics', in the particular context, actually refers to the intricate modifications that the learners of a second language usually make when they learn a new language. The cognitive learning techniques and the metacognitive learning strategies may be cited as two examples of the numerous types of learning strategies that exist and that are adopted and applied by the learners (Cohen, 2014). However, in our view, in order to get any benefit from this kind of operation and experience, it is necessary for the learners to actively participate in the actual

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [nrameshcalt@uohyd.ac.in](mailto:nrameshcalt@uohyd.ac.in)

writing activities that are either monitored by instructors or taught by their teachers. In those classroom situations where students are learning a second language, the teachers may adopt methods to boost the motivation of the learners by leading them through many phases integrated into the mission of developing good writing skills (Santangelo and Graham, 2015). Moreover, it is necessary to tailor the writing activities based on students' requirements and pursuits as the primary goal is to develop the skills of the students (Hopkins, 2014). In addition, it is also desired that a connection should be established between these activities and the actual world outside where the learners will be placed eventually to test their writing skills (Airey, 2016).

## 2. Challenges

It is necessary to implement a technique that is successful in order to motivate students to participate in writing activities, as well as to refine and develop their writing talents. The instructors must have a firm grasp on the competencies that need to be honed and the components that can make it easier to acquire knowledge in the areas of focus. In the last twenty years, the study of learning to write in a second language (also known as L2) has developed into a well-established area of study (Hyland, 2016). When teaching writing to students learning a second language, instructors need to choose a focus area that may act as a learning tool for their students (Alharbi, 2017). Moreover, language instructors should place the majority of their emphasis on the subject matter that may infuse the greatest amount of student interaction (Angelova and Zhao 2016). A combination of these goals with a pragmatic approach can help students achieve greater comprehension and more effective learning (Entwistle and Ramsden 2015).

It is rightly observed that once educators are certain that their learners have developed an interest in participating in activities designed to improve their writing abilities, the primary emphasis of their attention shifts to the participation of pupils in an effort to foster a positive learning experience that is sustainable over the long term (Wood et al. 2016). The development of sensitive context pedagogies has been beneficial in better understanding the texts that are provided in classrooms, the methods that students write, and the substantial usage of text within the groups that are being addressed (Ariffin, 2016). Teachers who instruct writing to students learning a second language are increasingly transitioning into the role of researcher as a result of their students' increased comprehension of written material (Pressley and Allington, 2014; Arzt and Kost, 2016). According to earlier observations, 'action research' may be defined as a structured research-reflection cycle that is democratised via the use of newly acquired knowledge and skills in educational settings (Burns 2013; Bailey 2016).

The most frequent factors that make studying and writing in a second language more challenging are issues like first language literacy, proficiency in the target language, and disparities in rhetorical approaches to the texts (Archibald, 2001; Barkaoui, 2016). The right kind of education may help students improve their proficiency across a range of language areas. Very few models have described the role of direction and instruction in the learning of a second language (Grabe, 2001; Chun et al., 2016; Collier et al. 2016). This is true even if there has been an increase in people's desire to study and write in a second language.

The primary process of teaching writing to students learning a second language may be broken down into two basic categories (Cornell et al., 2016):

- Learning to write: Where learners are taught to use linguistic properties to produce grammatically correct sentences.

- Writing to communicate: Where learners are trained to use extralinguistic properties to produce semantically and contextually correct sentences.

Learners must advance past their beginning writing skills and use target language in order to produce meaningful writing that engages readers (Richards and Rodgers, 2014; Crusan et al., (2016). This is a requirement for passing the course as well as developing the required skills. There is a correlation between proficiency in a language and the ability to choose and employ words and phrases that are suitable for the activity at hand. The language skills of L2 learners are a good indicator of their level of language competence (Cumming, 2001; da Costa et al., 2016). Therefore, it is necessary for the instructors to choose the approach that is both the most successful and the most efficient in terms of making the designated writing space more accessible. First of all, instructors of students learning a second language need to choose the appropriate methods for teaching writing to the students who are learning a second language (Dahlberg, 2016). These methods need to inspire students to study a second language with enthusiasm rather than dissuade them from doing so.

### **3. Literature Review**

In a very simplified manner, it is stated that learning strategies are the steps that are performed by the learners to improve their acquisition, storage, and retrieval of knowledge. Moreover, techniques for problem-solving, studying, and learning are also strategies that are used by the learners. No matter what they are called, strategies help students learn (Oxford and Crookall, 1989: 405). The L2 learners' writing skills and proficiency in a second language are evaluated on different scales and manners (Kubanyiova and Crookes, 2016). On many occasions, both macro and micro approaches are used to test proficiency when students are learning L2. While macro strategies help them create, plan, and rewrite, micro strategies instinctively look for words and syntax (Cumming, 2001; Lee, et al., 2016). These aspects lead learners of second languages to manage complex mental images and rhetorical objectives (Lee, Chodorow, and Gentile, 2016). The pupils employ problem-solving techniques in their writing in different manners. Editing and revision are two different compositional procedures which are often used by them. These methods increase the adaptability of rhetorical strategies (Larios et al., 2002). Effective L2 writers can design fictional environments (Master, et al. 2016, Hyland, 2002). The L2 learners' knowledge, values, genres, and expectations are taught to them through socialisation and the L2 learners are encouraged to adapt these to maintain their identity by internalising community norms (Larios et al., 2002; Naghdipour, 2016).

The process of 'benchmarking' helps comparisons throughout the entire school (Jawaid, 2014). For the benchmarking process to discover exemplary practice, a specified methodology is required. The complexity and issues of L2 learning and instruction are addressed through trans-comparative benchmarking (Neilson, 2016; Nguyen, 2016). A curriculum for L2 learners is conceptualised and codified for this purpose (Jawaid, 2014). To make benchmarking easier, benchmarks are divided into Quality Standards (QSs) and Quality Characteristics (QCs). The students, who are learning L2 writing, can benefit from modelling and describing the effective writing styles. Drafting, planning, generating, and altering ideas are all necessary for effective writing (Blanton et al., 2002; Hyland, 2002).

The L2 students receive ongoing feedback until they are able to fill out the assessment forms flexibly and freely to meet their goals (Qin and Uccelli, 2016). Students can write successfully after they understand the process (Hyland, 2002). A strategy called 'social-cognitive

skills observation' is used to measure this. This method promotes self-control and writing in young people (Blanton et al., 2002; Razi, 2016). Since any talent becomes automatic via imitation and restraint, self-regulation aids learning, adaptability, and skill transfer in students (Barkaoui, 2007; Roberts et al., 2017).

Since data in verbal reports often reflects the writing process, they require careful consideration (Hyland, 2016; Snow, Eslami, and Park, 2016). Writing out loud enables retroactive memory. However, 'Think Aloud Protocols' (TAP) demand that the authors explain their activities. It aids employees in outlining their ideas and plans (Mackey & Gass, 2015; Staden and Purcell, 2016). This habit might, however, affect cognitive abilities. Speaking aloud while writing had little impact on students' writing ability under controlled circumstances (Yang et al., 2014). The planning and revising processes of L2 learners are revealed by this technique (Wong, 2005; Tahtinen-Pacheco & Merchant, 2016). Lei (2008) records L2 writers and then talks about their writing techniques. This approach evaluates reading and writing without restriction (Lei, 2008). Radiant thinking is used during brainstorming. This approach is also used to study books, organise and organize compositions, and extend subjects (Sim et al., 2012). L2 brainstorming is therefore essential as learning words and concepts is equally necessary. There are two stages to brainstorming: students are first allowed to create small groups. Each student is given a topic to write on and a set amount of time. After this exercise, the recommendations of all of the group members are collated.

Students are allowed to brainstorm in the class. Students yell out their thoughts on a subject and the instructor writes them on the board. According to research, instructors brainstorm to find students' common interests (Kang, 2005). This method lets most pupils learn a second language. Brainstorming is natural and uses connections between experiences and imagery. It interprets natural logic and reasoning-related information (Sim et al., 2012). This method involves 1-2 hours of enjoyable writing. Students write fables using narrative target language. Fables utilise verbs to explain direct speech, adverbs to describe the speaker, dramatic emphasis via subject inversion, and verb patterns (VanPatten and Williams, 2014). The 'story switch milling exercise' helps pupils recollect their story eight times while fable writing. These stories boost L2 learners' confidence and fluency and allow for elaboration and connection.

Speed writing evaluates each student's writing ability. Students get 15 minutes to write on the subject. They focus on concepts, not grammar, punctuation, or language within these methods. Students must write swiftly without crossing or fixing errors. Students cannot collaborate using this method (Cook, 2013). On the other hand, 'loop writing' promotes paragraph cohesion. In this strategy, L2 learners write cause and effect with coherence and consistency. Loop writing involves organising speed-written thoughts (Cook, 2013). Loop writing organises concepts in a text. Individual or group execution is possible. Students should read and organise their phrases and paragraphs. This method helps students grasp L2 writing. In most cases, 50-word mini sagas are great for brief writing lessons. It teaches effective writing since L2 learners can read and comprehend it. This method emphasises correctness and may encourage students (Garcia-Sanchez and Lujan-Garcia, 2015).

#### **4. The Present Study**

The present study has two specified objectives.

- To determine which writing methods improve second language learners' writing.
- To determine the best methods for motivating second-language writers.

#### *4.1 Methodology*

The present research made use of a quantitative analysis. There were 10 instructors and 100 students from various elementary and secondary schools in the city of Coimbatore, which is located in the state of Tamil Nadu in India. The SPSS (Version 20.0) was used to do the analysis of the data that was acquired from the study. The data was obtained from the learners via the use of a questionnaire, which was based on the abilities that the learners are expected to possess in order to have a better knowledge of the tactics used in the classroom.

#### *4.2 Result and Discussion*

##### *4.2.1 Demographic and Data Analysis*

Coimbatore schoolchildren's second-language acquisition was the subject of a questionnaire. Teachers conducted 160 surveys. The research recruited 65.3% female students and 34.8% male students. The 7-8-year-old age group had the most pupils (54.0%). A major part (64.0%) of L2 writing students were interested while many of them (10.3%) were not interested in L2, whereas 25.8% of the students were moderately interested.

##### **(a) Brainstorming**

The figures indicate the frequency of several methods that were used on the students in order to evaluate their capabilities in regard to acquiring L2. According to the findings, the vast majority of educators (38.1%) acknowledge that the practice of brainstorming was responsible for the pupils' high level of interest. In contrast, just 12.5% of the instructors are on the fence about whether or not their students have an interest in the method of brainstorming's further growth. In addition, the majority of the instructors (36.9% of them strongly agree while 43.1% of them agree) said that brainstorming is beneficial in determining the primary ideas involved in learning to write in L2. Students need to be confident in order to participate fully in the process of brainstorming since it requires them to share their ideas and thoughts with their peers. As a result, the vast majority of the educators (75%) believe that brainstorming was unsuccessful with the pupils because they were guarded and resistant.

##### **(b) Writing Fables**

Regarding the method of writing fables, the vast majority of educators (84.4%) are completely in agreement that writing fables helps children improve their thinking capacity. A vast majority (52.5%) of the respondents gave a response that was indifferent to the use of speed writing to evaluate the student's writing abilities. On the other hand, 49.4% of respondents disagree with the statement that pupils learn better while working in groups. The use of loop writing to aid in the structure and comprehension of a second language was highly supported by roughly 81.9% of the instructors who responded to the survey. The acquisition of writing abilities is seen as the most challenging activity for students learning a second language by all the instructors (84.4%). The instructors said that the majority of the pupils (56.3%), who learned L2 using the approach of brainstorming, found that they loved it. Writing fables (4.4%) and participating in mini sagas (3.8%) were rated as the learning methods the pupils enjoyed the least.

##### *4.2.2 Comparing brainstorming with other types of creative problem-solving*

The cross-tabulation utilizing a Likert scale to evaluate creative problem-solving gives useful insights into respondents' impressions of different strategies for encouraging creativity and problem-solving in diverse settings (Table 1).

Model	Measures	Creative Problem Solving					
		SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
The difference between brainstorming and narrating stories is that the former boosts confidence	SA	5	17	0	0	0	22
	A	0	6	54	0	0	61
	N	0	0	52	0	0	52
	D	0	0	1	16	3	20
	SD	0	0	0	0	5	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>160</b>
The difference between brainstorming and speed writing as a method of evaluating writing abilities	SA	18	4	0	0	0	22
	A	0	16	45	0	0	61
	N	0	0	39	13	0	52
	D	0	0	0	7	13	20
	SD	0	0	0	0	5	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>160</b>
The difference between brainstorming and loop writing as a method for evaluating comprehension	SA	22	0	0	0	0	22
	A	61	0	0	0	0	61
	N	48	4	0	0	0	52
	D	0	3	10	7	0	20
	SD	0	0	0	4	1	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>160</b>

**Table 1:** Cross-tabulation of findings

The majority of responders (28%) agree or strongly agree that brainstorming boosts confidence more than recounting tales. This implies that brainstorming, a process of idea development and exploration, gives learners more confidence in their creative ability than storytelling. However, 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that recounting tales may build confidence as much as brainstorming. Brainstorming outperforms rapid writing for writing evaluation. A Majority (38%) of responders said brainstorming is better for this. Brainstorming's collaborative and free-flowing nature is better for testing writing abilities than speed writing's organised and timed method. However, 20% of responders disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that speed writing may be a valid alternative writing assessment approach. 43% of responders said brainstorming is better than loop writing for assessing understanding. This suggests that brainstorming, which stimulates open dialogue and idea exchange, improves



understanding more than loop writing, which is more introverted. 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed, demonstrating that some people prefer loop writing for comprehension testing. The cross-tabulation shows a favourable view of brainstorming as a tool for creative problem-solving. While there are some conflicting perspectives, the research shows that brainstorming improves confidence, writing, and understanding. Individual preferences and learning styles may affect these judgments, and hence, subsequent studies might examine the precise reasons influencing respondents' choices for each approach. However, the findings show that creative problem-solving and talent assessment need varied methodologies.

Brainstorming (BS) seems to be the most effective of the four writing methods so far evaluated. Brainstorming positively affects the dependent variable, according to the Beta value of 0.691. Thus, the research found beneficial results from brainstorming. The following table (Table 2) reveals how various writing approaches affect the MODEL, the dependent variable.

Model	B	S.E	BETA	t	Sig
Brainstorming (BS)	.691	.060	.633	11.670	.000
Narrative Writing (NW)	-.239	.068	-.167	-3.173	.002
Speed Writing (SW)	-.046	.046	-.050	-1.000	.319
Loop Writing (LW)	.682	.042	.499	16.282	.000

**Table 2:** *Brainstorming, recounting tales, rapid writing, and loop writing significance*

Brainstorming and the dependent variable are statistically significant due to the high t-value of 11.670 and the very low p-value of 0.000. This suggests that brainstorming has a significant effect on the examined result since the observed connection between brainstorming and the dependent variable is unlikely to have arisen by coincidence. On the other hand, narrative writing has a -0.239 Beta. Unlike brainstorming, narrative writing decreases the dependent variable. This negative link is statistically significant with a t-value of -3.173 and a significance level of 0.002. Narrative writing may not be as helpful as other methods in this research. Speed Writing (SW), with a Beta value of -0.050, has little influence on the dependent variable. Speed writing does not affect the dependent variable, according to the t-value of -1.000 and the strong p-value of 0.319. The results suggest that rapid writing does not affect the outcome of interest. Loop Writing (LW) improves the dependent variable more than speed writing. Loop writing highly correlates with favourable study results, as seen by its huge Beta value of 0.682. The high t-value of 16.282 and p-value of 0.000 support this association's statistical significance. According to this research, loop writing is an excellent method for reaching the intended result. Table 2 shows that various writing approaches affect MODEL differently. Brainstorming and loop writing have considerable beneficial effects. Speed writing does not affect the dependent variable, but narrative writing does. These findings illuminate the possible advantages of diverse writing styles and may help writers optimise their practises for desired results.

This data is further put into regression analysis (Table 3). The first column, 'Regression' shows the regression model's variance. SS is 16.442. Regression has 5 df and 40.109 M S. The F-value is 414.242, and the p-value (Sig) is extremely modest (.0006). Under the premise of no

significant difference between groups, the p-value shows the likelihood of receiving outcomes as severe as those observed. The regression model's dependent variable and independent variable(s) have a significant association since the p-value is minimal (usually less than 0.05). The residual variance, 'Residual' is in the second column. The residuals are the discrepancies between observed values and regression model predictions. Residuals have 155 degrees of freedom and 14.008 sum of squares. The mean square is .096. The residuals' sum of squares should be less than the regression to show the model's unexplained variance. The final column, 'Total' shows the dataset's overall variance. The whole has 160 degrees of freedom and 164.444 squares. It shows ANOVA findings that compare the means of two or more groups to discover whether there are significant differences.

	SUM	df	M S	f	Sig
Regression	16.442	5	40.109	414.242	.0006
Residual	14.008	155	.096		
Total	164.444	160			

**Table 3:** ANOVA measures variance

The ANOVA statistics (Table 3) give crucial regression analysis variance breakdown information. The regression model fits the data well and explains a lot of variation, as seen by the substantial F-value and relatively tiny p-value. The 'Regression' row's sum of squares reflects the regression model's explained variance, whereas the 'Residual' rows show the errors. Regression and residual sums of squares should equal the total.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings of this research have supplied important new insights into the numerous writing strategies that are employed to cultivate writing talents among those students who are learning a second language. It becomes clear that brainstorming is the strategy that is the most useful, having a constructive influence on the confidence, writing abilities, and understanding of the students. On the other hand, narrative writing demonstrated just a moderate level of efficacy and even had a negative impact on the variable that was being studied. While learners' writing skills were not substantially affected by speed writing, loop writing was shown to be extremely useful and promoted better results. These results highlight how important it is to pick proper instructional strategies in order to encourage and engage second language learners in writing tasks. In order to promote a constructive and long-term learning environment in the classroom for second-language students, teachers may use techniques such as brainstorming and loop writing as useful tools. These techniques can help teachers improve their students' writing skills. The development of writing abilities among those learning a second language may be improved by more study that investigates the preferences of individual learners and then modifies instructional methods appropriately.

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## Materials Evaluation in ELT: An Indian Perspective

*Mudasir Mushtaq Pir & Sajad Hussain Wani<sup>1</sup>*

*University of Kashmir*

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### ABSTRACT

Materials form the central core of an ELT programme around which the whole process of teaching and learning revolves. Materials define the aims and objectives of the programme, the syllabus, the teaching-learning activities and the teacher-learner roles. Materials also provide a framework for testing the language skills of the learners. In this regard, it becomes crucial to develop or choose the materials that are suitable for a particular teaching-learning programme. Keeping this in view, materials evaluation in ELT becomes crucial to judge or measure the value of materials for any ELT programme. ELT Materials in Indian context are a crucial element of the teaching/learning programme. Given the multicultural and multilingual nature of the country, developing appropriate materials is a great challenge. In the Indian context teachers are unaware about materials development and are not given any training on the field (Sekar, 2020) and the states lack resources and therefore struggle to make suitable books (Nawani, 2017), it is crucial to examine the materials that the teachers use in their classrooms. Various frameworks have been suggested to carry out the evaluation of ELT materials from time to time. This paper discusses various approaches in materials evaluation in ELT and provides an overall picture of the dominant approaches that are followed for materials evaluation. The paper also discusses the case of materials evaluation in the Indian scenario by presenting a case study in the context of Kashmir.

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### 1. Introduction

Materials in ELT include anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language (Tomlinson, 2001). Materials include visual, auditory and print materials (Tomlinson, 2001), realia and representations (McGrath, 2013). Realia are real objects such as a chair or a piece of fruit and representation includes a drawing or a photograph of someone or something. Such materials can be called as non-verbal because they do not consist of any language content. McGrath (2013) argues that the advantage of verbal materials which include written and spoken materials over those of non-verbal materials is that they consist of both language and content. The form of language in verbal materials serves as the examples of language use and the content refers to the ideas carried by the language to which the learners react. Despite technological advances in electronics, textbooks are still the most used language learning and teaching materials (Tomlinson, 2001). The textbook materials provide the main basis for the curriculum (Richards, 1993) and also provide an outline to carry out teaching/learning activities. Many researchers (Grant, 1987; O'Neill 1982; Hutchinson and Torres, 1994; Ur 1996; Cunningsworth 1995; Richards, 2001; and Tomlinson) have argued in favor of using the textbook materials in ELT. Textbook materials are cost effective, provide a basis for language teaching and learning

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [pirmudasir80@gmail.com](mailto:pirmudasir80@gmail.com) & [sajadw@uok.edu.in](mailto:sajadw@uok.edu.in)

curriculum, and provide the teachers with guidelines to carry out the teaching process effectively. Moreover, the textbooks provide learners with samples of language upon which they can maximize their learning.

## **2. What is Materials Evaluation?**

Materials evaluation is a process that measures the value or potential value of learning materials (Tomilinson, 2019). It can also be defined as a matching process i.e. matching needs to available solutions (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Richards (2001) defines evaluation as a process of judging the suitability of materials for particular purposes. The purpose of evaluation is to adopt new textbooks or identify particular strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use to make the optimum of their strong points and strengthen their weaker areas through adaptation or by substituting material from other books (Cunningsworth, 1995).

The success or failure of a teaching/learning program where textbook materials are a central part of the program, can be determined by the quality of the textbook materials. In the Indian educational system with centrality of the textbooks, fixed syllabi and an examination based system (Butalia, 1993), it is significant to not only examine their effectiveness in developing the English language of the learners. Aslam (1997) believes that the English textbooks in India are mainly produced by publishers for commercial purposes. The textbooks produced for commercial purposes are not based on the principles of second language acquisition (Tomilinson, 2019). Sheldon (1988) states that the textbook materials are often developed in haste due to the highly restrictive nature of teaching and the pressure of heavy timetables.

## **3. Approaches to Materials Evaluation**

This section is a discussion on the dominant approaches to materials evaluation used in various contexts across the world. These approaches can inform evaluation of textbook materials in the Indian context. This section also discusses various research studies that have been carried out in the Indian context utilizing these approaches.

### *3.1. Micro and Macro Evaluation*

Micro evaluation focuses on the detailed evaluation of a particular task, whereas a macro evaluation is an overall assessment of an entire set of materials to check whether they have worked on or not. The approaches were proposed by Ellis in 1997. Ellis (1997) argues that a macro evaluation can be a daunting task in terms of planning and collecting the necessary information. However, a macro evaluation can be based on a series of micro evaluations.

Micro evaluation can be carried out in three ways. A student-based evaluation examines students' attitudes to the task and the task is said to have worked only if the students found it useful or enjoyable. A response-based evaluation examines whether the actual outcomes of the task match with the predicted outcomes. Finally, learning based evaluation examines whether the task has resulted in any new learning.

Purpose of micro evaluation can be two-fold; an objective model evaluation and a development model evaluation. An objectives model evaluation determines whether a task has met its objectives. However, it is necessary to take into consideration the learners' learning styles, their level of proficiency, motivation and the resources available. For example, an activity that requires the learners to engage in a meaningful conversation in L2 cannot be evaluated empirically in a classroom with learners that have the proficiency of a beginner. In that case the



developmental model evaluation can help to provide insights into improving the task. It can be concluded that the contextual factors should somehow determine the purpose of materials evaluation (Ellis, 1997).

In Indian context, micro-evaluation of the ELT textbooks revealed that the examples of sentences in grammar section of one of the textbooks are either grammatically unacceptable, absurd or irrational (Sharma, 1998); presence of lengthy texts, unfamiliar concepts, historical events, little support of illustrative materials (Kana'n, 2008). Such micro-evaluation of the textbooks is a lengthy process and the researchers have to evaluate some portion of the textbook and draw inferences about the whole textbook on a little amount of data they analyze. Micro-evaluations can be made easy if the teachers are trained to evaluate the textbooks they use for teaching. These evaluations can be helpful in in-use and post-use evaluations and the teachers can prepare feedback regarding these textbooks.

### *3.2. Checklist Method*

Checklists are instruments that are used to evaluate materials in ELT against some specific criteria. The evaluation checklists published by various researchers vary in their detailed criteria. However, upon a close examination some agreement can be found in their broader areas of focus in which the detailed criteria can be grouped together. Tucker's (1978) and Grant (1987) checklists are based on three categories; linguistic, psychological and pedagogical principles underlying modern methods of language teaching (Tucker, 1978) and the needs of learners, the needs of teachers and the contextual constraints (Grant, 1987). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) checklist is based on four categories: audience (background), aims of the materials, content (linguistic content covered and the skills focused on), and methodology of the materials. Subjective and objective analysis can be employed at each of the categories in the checklist where subjective analysis involves what the learners think they need and the objective analysis involves analyzing what textbooks or materials offer. Cunningsworth (1995) proposes four general guidelines for textbook evaluation checklist which include; aims and objectives of the learning programme, learners' present and future needs, methodology, and role of the textbooks in the learning process. Under these guidelines more specific evaluative criteria can be used such as; the organization of the textbook, the language skills, language content and selection and grading. For Cunningsworth (1995) the learning/teaching context should act as a starting point for evaluating the textbooks. Garinger (2002) proposes a categorization of specific evaluative criteria under four categories; program and course, skills, exercises and activities and practical concerns. Similarly, Rubdy (2003) incorporates the evaluation criteria under four categories; psychological, pedagogical, process and content validity.

Sheldon (1988) proposes five major categories for textbook evaluation; practical factors (such as availability), physical characteristics (such as layout and graphics), psychological and psycholinguistic aspects (such as learner needs and learning objectives, their background, target age range, culture, conceptual and schematic development, expectations and learning preferences), organizational factors (such as provision of linkage, sequencing/grading, stimulus/practice/revision, recycling and internal and external coherence) and criteria that address appropriacy, authenticity, cultural bias and flexibility (Sheldon 1988). Sheldon, however, realizes the importance of incorporating local criteria that a researcher must use in order to meet the requirements of his/her research. Similarly, Richards (2001) proposes a five-category

evaluative framework which include; program factors, teacher factors, learner factors, content factors and pedagogical factors.

Litz (2005) in his study evaluated a textbook on the basis of six general criteria; the textbook package (value, content and methodology), layout and design, activities and tasks, skills, language type and content, and subject and content.

Mukundan (2011, 2012) divides the evaluative criteria into two groups; general attributes and learning teaching content. The first group includes five evaluative criteria which are; relation of the materials to the syllabus, methodology, suitability to learners and physical attributes and supplementary materials. The second group includes nine evaluative criteria which are; general, listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and exercises.

Before deciding on a checklist for evaluation it is crucial to identify different criteria in different contexts as argued by many scholars (Sheldon 1988, Byrd 2001). For example, the various evaluation checklists (Tucker, 1975; Williams, 1983; Breen and Candlin, 1987; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Sheldon, 1988; McDonough and Shaw, 2003; Cunningsworth, 1995; Littlejohn, 1998, Masuhara 2008) that have been designed vary in their criteria that characterize specific contexts of ELT teaching. Tomilinson (2019) suggests guidelines for developing checklists for materials evaluation that include universal criteria, age-specific criteria, content specific criteria, media-specific criteria, and local criteria. Furthermore, questions in a checklist must be free of dogma, easy to answer, unambiguous, and reflect new insights into language description (McGrath, 2016; Tomilinson, 2019).

Checklists have been used by various researchers in evaluating ELT materials in India such as Kumar (1996), Ramanujam (2001), Patra (2004), Kana'n (2008), Shanthini (2010), Anjaneyulu (2014), Swami (2015), Singh and Choudhary (2015), and Al-Maqtari (2021). Their checklists consist of items based on the local criteria besides the items based on the universal criteria. For example, the items based on the local criteria in Shanthini (2010) include, "Sample listening text and dialogues in CDs and tapes are well recorded...", "The items and exercises in the Bridge Course book is a continuation of the Plus-two English book", etc. However, there are some items that ask more than one question at a time for example "There are reasonable and appropriate number of exercises in the book and the language used in the exercises are simple", "Exercises in the book help me to revise grammar, vocabulary, listening and reading, speaking, and writing skills" and "The grammar and vocabulary exercises are very clear, interesting and easily understandable." An evaluation checklist must ask one question at a time in order to avoid ambiguity while taking responses from the students. An exercise can be understandable, but one cannot assume that it is interesting as well which makes it difficult to interpret these items. These checklists are, however, economical in terms of the number of items. One of the important studies on the development of checklists for materials evaluation in ELT in the Indian context is Ramanujam (2001). Ramanujam (2001) has developed a checklist of 29 items based on the basis of five criteria: comprehensiveness, sensitivity to learners, effectiveness of approach and methodology, reading path clarity and appealing physical qualities, adequacy of guidance for the teacher and learner, and general attributes of the textbooks. The checklist was developed for the appraisal and selection of General English textbooks at the undergraduate level in Nagarjuna University, Madras. The checklist can be used in evaluating ELT materials, but it is important to consider all the contextual factors before using the checklist because some of the items in the checklist may not be relevant to the other contexts. Checklist method can be one of the effective

methods of textbook evaluation in India given the large number of schools, colleges, students and teachers.

### *3.3. Littlejohn's Three Level Analysis*

This framework examines what materials contain rather than coming up with implicit judgements about what materials should look like. Some frameworks contain impressionistic judgments about the materials rather than analyzing them in depth. Littlejohn's framework (2011) provides a detailed description of the materials which will help a teacher-analyst to have a close look into the materials before coming to their own conclusions. This framework draws on the models of Breen and Candlin (1987) and Richards and Rogers (2001) and analyses materials from a pedagogic viewpoint and describes their methodology and the linguistic nature of their contents. The framework proposes three levels of analysis to examine the aspects of the materials. As one moves through the different levels of analysis more abstract and complex aspects of the materials require subjective analysis. The first level gives an objective description of the materials. This includes statements of description, physical aspects of the materials and main steps in the instructional sections. At level two a subjective analysis of the materials is carried out. This step involves subdivision into constituent tasks, an analysis of tasks describing what is the learner expected to do, participants and content. Level three is a subjective inference from the analysis at level one and level two. This involves deducing aims, principles of selection and sequence, deducing teacher and learner roles and deducing demands on learner's process competence.

Although the textbook evaluation framework proposed by Littlejohn (2011) provides a detailed analysis of materials in ELT, the actual worth of the textbooks cannot be measured as long as they are not used in the class. During the pre-use evaluation of textbook materials this framework will serve as a significant tool in the selection of textbooks for a particular ELT program. But, whilst use and post use evaluations can provide useful insights into the perspectives of the teachers and learners regarding the materials. This framework risks going into a sea of details without actually using the textbook materials in a classroom. As long as the textbook materials are not used in a classroom it is too naive to think about their effectiveness.

### *3.4. External and Internal Evaluation*

McDonough et al (2013) propose external evaluation (or macro evaluation) and internal evaluation (or micro evaluation) of materials. External evaluation is a brief overview from outside; examines the aims, the contents and the organization of the materials by looking at the authors' claims about the materials and the table of contents. The claims made by the authors reveal the information about the target audience, the context in which the materials are to be used, the authors' views on language and language learning, and the intended aims and objectives.

The next stage called internal evaluation is a close analysis of materials in relation to learners' and teachers' needs and motivation. McDonough, et al (2013) suggest examining two or more than two units in order analyze the presentation of the skills and the grading and sequencing of the materials, discourse skills, authenticity of the listening sections, the relationship of tests with the learner needs and the texts taught, the consideration of the learning styles, and motivation factor of the materials.

## **4. Need for Evaluation: An Indian Scenario**

English is taught as a compulsory subject in many states and UTs at the school and college level in India. Textbooks are the main source of materials used for teaching and learning English in India. These textbooks are prescribed by the boards of school education at the school level which include the Central Board of School Education (CBSE) and the State Boards. CBSE selects a textbook development committee which consists of teachers affiliated with various CBSE institutes across the country. The textbooks developed by the committee are prescribed for all the schools affiliated with the CBSE. For example, the General English textbooks for secondary and higher secondary classes for 2021, 2022 and 2023 sessions have members from only four or five states from a country with 28 states. The state boards (now UT board in Jammu and Kashmir) such as Jammu and Kashmir board (JKBOSE) also develops the textbooks in a similar fashion where a team of a few teachers is selected for the textbook development for English language teaching. The textbook development committee of JKBOSE has selected the members from only four districts which leaves out teachers from six other districts. The members for textbook development selected by the CBSE or JKBOSE do not make a representative sample of the teaching learning situation. Similarly, at the college level textbooks for English are developed by the departments of English that these colleges are affiliated with. General English textbooks for colleges in Kashmir are developed by the Department of English, University of Kashmir.

Given the above discussion, it becomes crucial to consider some important questions regarding the ELT textbooks. What are the textbook writers' theories of language learning and teaching? Are these textbooks suitable for the learners? What are the aims and objectives of these textbooks? Do the aims and objectives of the textbooks meet the needs of the learners? How can we adapt these textbooks to meet the requirements of a particular context of learning? Textbook evaluation needs to be carried out in these contexts of English language teaching and learning in order to answer these questions. Because textbooks are the primary source of English language teaching and learning in the schools and colleges of India, textbook evaluation will help in developing textbooks that are effective in the classrooms of India.

Many Indian researchers (Sharma, 1998; Chelliah, 2001; Kana'n 2008, Singh and Choudhary, 2015; Mohanty, 2020) have identified various problematic areas in English language textbook materials across the country. The textbooks are incorporate grammatically unacceptable sentences (Sharma, 1998), lack in terms of providing authentic materials for language acquisition (Chelliah, 2001), unfamiliar concepts and lengthy texts (Kana'n, 2008), lack of aims and objectives and unsatisfactory reading passages (Singh and Choudhary, 2015), and unsuitable themes and highly technical language (Mohanty, 2020).

The need for evaluation of textbooks in this scenario is necessary for various other reasons. Firstly, it will help the teachers to understand the principles on which the textbooks have been developed so that they can make best of them in their contexts. Secondly, their feedback can be utilized to better understand the working of the textbooks in the classrooms because they have the firsthand experience of the learners, the institutions and the overall environment in which these textbooks are used. Thirdly, teachers' feedback can help in developing textbooks with suitable, appropriate and relevant content for the students. Moreover, the teachers can develop their understanding of the field of textbook development and evaluation.

## **5. The Textbook "English 1": A Case Study**

“English 1” is a general English textbook prescribed by the University of Kashmir for first semester students at the undergraduate level in Kashmir. The textbook is used as a core material in the classrooms. There are no other supplementary materials and the same textbook is used by both the teachers and the learners.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define materials evaluation as a matching process i.e. matching the needs to available solutions. Adopting this definition, “English 1” can be seen as a solution to the needs of the learners. The present study carried out a needs analysis of the students in the first stage. At the second stage, an evaluation of the textbook was carried out. By combining the needs analysis with the textbook evaluation inferences about the usefulness of the textbook are drawn.

### 5.1. Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is one of the crucial elements in ELT as it helps in developing suitable materials for a language teaching programme. Nunan (1988) states that needs analysis guides teachers in selecting appropriate content and tasks to provide a better understanding of the purpose of instruction for the learners. The main purpose of the needs analysis is to match the beliefs, expectations and perceptions of teachers/administrators/curriculums with the needs of learners.

English is taught as a compulsory subject in the colleges of Kashmir. The students are likely to prefer meeting their immediate needs which includes passing the degree examination. However, it is significant to examine their main aims and objectives for studying English. Aslam (1997) in his study on needs analysis of Kashmiri undergraduate students found that more than 70% of the students study English for wider purposes such as facing interviews, listening to radio and television programmes, applying for jobs and making better use of the library books. Similarly, Ara and Kak (2009) reveals that the needs of the students goes beyond passing the examinations encompassing interpersonal communication with individuals from diverse nations, online exploration, reading literary works, and refinement of personal attributes.

English language teaching has textbooks as one of its significant components in the context of Kashmir. Aslam (1997) is of the view that the general English textbooks in Indian context, and particularly in Kashmir, have no learning aims and objectives. Teachers heavily rely on these textbooks which do not equip their students with communicative skills. Mir and Sultana (2016) in their study on ELT textbooks in government schools in Jammu and Kashmir found that the textbooks lack in terms of developing the four language skills. In this context it is significant to explore the needs of the students and examine whether their needs are reflected in the textbooks that are prescribed for them. Given below is the frequency of responses for the needs analysis carried out in the present study (N=120).

1.	<b>Reason for Learning English</b> (Choose more than one option)	
	Options	Percentage
1.1	To pass the examination	68%
1.2	To write your own content.	24%
1.3	To get employment.	72%
1.4	To read books.	32%
1.5	To understand other subjects	52%
1.6	Other (Mention)	12%
2.	<b>Usefulness of English for Future</b>	

	Options	Percentage
2.1	Very Useful	48%
2.2	Moderately Useful	30%
2.3	Not Useful	22%
<b>3.</b>	<b>Your Level of Proficiency in English at Present</b>	
	Options	Percentage
3.1	Basic: very limited vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation heavily influenced by mother tongue, short conversation on a few predictable topics.	69%
3.2	Intermediate: can manage comfortably in familiar situations and with familiar topics, though still some difficulty with vocabulary, idioms, grammar, and pronunciation.	29%
3.3	Advanced: able to converse fluently and naturally on most topics; little difficulty with vocabulary, idioms, grammar, and pronunciation.	0%
<b>4.</b>	<b>As a learner of English language; your proficiency is lowest in which of the following skills? (Mark more than one option)</b>	
	Option	Percentage
4.1	Speaking	64%
4.2	Reading	20%
4.3	Writing	52%
4.4	Listening	26%
<b>5.</b>	<b>Which of the following language skills require more improvement for increasing your proficiency in English language (Mark more than one option)</b>	
	Option	Percentage
5.1	Speaking	66%
5.2	Reading	19%
5.3	Writing	57%
5.4	Listening	22%

**Table 1:** Results from the needs analysis of first semester students of Kashmir

Findings from the needs analysis indicate that the students consider English language important in their lives and they have several reasons for learning the language. The students' attitude towards the English is positive in terms of securing their future goals. English is considered significant in securing jobs (Table 1). The findings in this study are consistent with the previous research studies (Aslam, 1997; Ara, 2016) carried out in Kashmir. Only a small number of the students i.e., 12% do not consider English language important.

None of the students rate themselves fluent in English as all of them grouped themselves from Basic to Intermediate range in their proficiency. Speaking and writing skills are rated the highest (Table 1) with 66% of the students who want to improve their speaking skills and 52% of the students want to improve their writing skills. There is also a fair amount of the students who want to develop their reading and listening skills as well. These findings reveal that the four

language skills are given prime importance in English language learning. These findings reveal that the learners expect the textbook to help them develop these skills.

### *5.2. Textbook Evaluation*

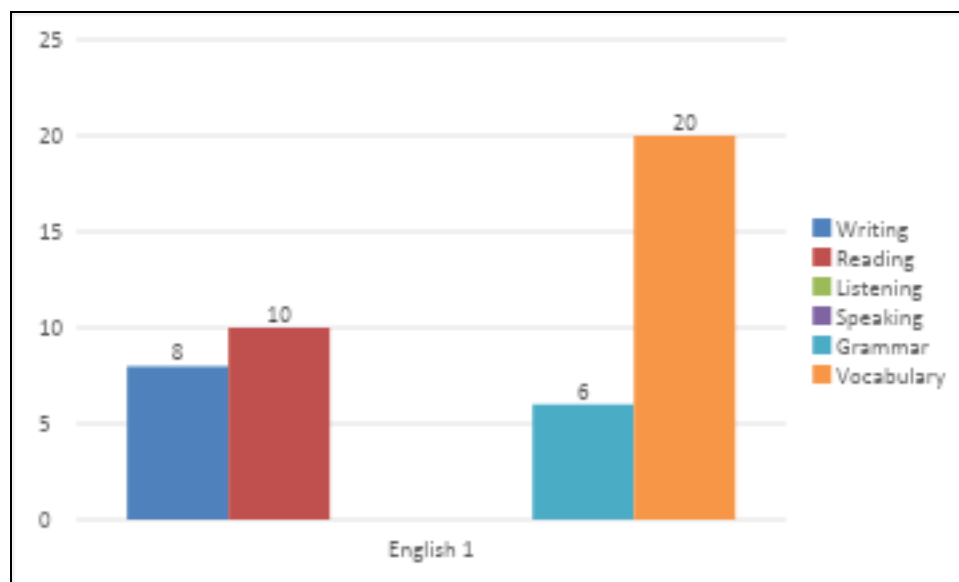
Examining the claims made by the authors of the textbook 'English 1', we can draw inferences about what authors think those needs are. In addition, we can also understand why the materials have been produced and what approach they propose for language learning (McDonough and Shaw, 2013). The claims made by the authors are summarized as follows:

- a. To use a learner-centric approach to language teaching by using texts from diverse genres and cultures.
- b. To develop the four language skills-listening, reading, speaking and writing skills-of the students.

From the above claims we can infer that the authors think that learners need to develop listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. The solution they present is the use of texts from diverse genres and cultures using a learner-centric approach. The claims made by the authors are quite strong in terms of language teaching-learning and need critical evaluation in order to examine if they are justified.

The present study carried out the internal evaluation, following McDonough and Shaw (2013), approach of the textbook in order to examine whether the claims of the authors can be justified. The textbook is divided into four sections which include short stories, essays, poems and one-act play. The first section contains a One-act play "The New Hangman" by Laurence Housman. The second section contains two essays "Wings of Fire (An Extract) by APJ Abdul Kalam" and "One World: One Culture?" by Pakenham, McEntire and Williams. The poems are included in the third section: The Chimney Sweeper by W Blake, A Prayer for my Daughter by WB Yeats and "Dacca Gauzes" by Agha Shahid Ali. Fourth section contains two short stories "The Lottery" by Munshi Prem Chand and "The Bet" by A Chekov. To localize the content of language teaching, texts from India literature have been included in the textbook. The authors believe that the learners' English language proficiency, critical thinking and creativity can be promoted by a genre-based approach.

A close analysis of the textbook was carried out by examining four units of the textbook from the four sections. The analysis reveals that textbooks provide a variety of reading and writing activities for the students. Each unit starts with a reading text such as a play or a short story which is followed by the reading comprehension questions. The reading texts from different genres in each module provide the learners with authentic contexts for language use in a specific genre. Moreover, these texts provide learners with awareness about the extended forms of discourse and the use of language beyond the sentence level. The other exercises that follow the reading texts in a unit are vocabulary exercises and writing exercises. The vocabulary exercises are taught in the context of the reading texts which exposes the learners to a contextualized language learning. However, there is an uneven distribution of the four language skills in the textbook as there are no listening and speaking activities in the textbook. The following graph shows the distribution based on the exercises in the textbook 'English 1'.



*Graph 1: Distribution of exercises in the textbook 'English 1'*

## 6. Discussion

In textbook evaluation, it is significant to assess the alignment between the stated objectives and the actual content. The present case study on the textbook 'English' reveals that while the textbook purports to foster the development of all the four language skills-reading, writing, listening, and speaking- the absence of listening and speaking exercises raises significant concerns regarding its efficacy in achieving these goals. Listening and speaking are integral components of language learning, playing a vital role in communication. The needs analysis of the learners also revealed the desire to develop listening and speaking skills. This discrepancy between learner needs and the content of the textbook also highlights the issue at hand. The textbook fails to align with the learners' needs and also overlooks fundamental aspects of language learning. This reinforces the imperative for educators and curriculum developers to carefully evaluate materials to ensure that they reflect the diverse linguistic goals and aspirations of the learners to facilitate a meaningful and efficient language learning experience.

## 7. Conclusion

This paper discussed various approaches to materials evaluation in ELT. Teachers and researchers can utilize any of these approaches or a mixture of various approaches to evaluate ELT materials according to their need. One of the key strengths of the checklist method is its systematic approach to evaluation. However, this approach tends to oversimplify the complexity of materials evaluation, reducing their evaluation to a checklist may overlook important context-specific factors. Furthermore, the checklist method often relies on the expertise of evaluators to select appropriate criteria. This can introduce a degree of subjectivity into the evaluation process, as different evaluators may prioritize different criteria or interpret them differently. Similarly, McDonough and Shaw's framework for materials evaluation does not provide guidelines on how to carry out the process of evaluation and different evaluators may interpret the textbooks differently introducing subjectivity in their evaluations. Andrew Littlejohn's three-level analysis framework prompts evaluators to consider the overall structure and progression of the materials, ensuring that they align with the needs of the target learners and follow a logical and coherent sequence. At the micro level, the analysis dives into the individual



units or lessons, examining the alignment between learning objectives and activities, as well as the effectiveness of instructions and the variety of tasks. While the framework provides a structured approach, it may not fully capture the complexity and multifaceted nature of ELT materials. The analysis primarily focuses on the internal features of materials and may not adequately consider external factors, such as the availability of supplementary resources, technological integration, or cultural relevance. These external factors play a significant role in the overall effectiveness and suitability of materials. In addition, the framework's effectiveness heavily relies on the expertise and subjectivity of the evaluators. Evaluators need to possess a strong understanding of language teaching principles and pedagogy to ensure an accurate and meaningful evaluation.

The research on materials evaluation is most commonly addressed to the teachers. The role of teacher is seen not only as a language trainer within the boundaries of the classroom but also as a materials developer and a materials evaluator. However, in countries where English is taught as a second or a foreign language in schools and colleges, such as India, there is a lack of awareness about the research on materials development and evaluation and the teachers are seen as mere language trainers. The materials for General English are developed by the Boards of Education at the school level and the Universities at the college level in the context of India. The contextual factors such as the learner needs (as revealed in the case study of the textbook 'English 1', teacher needs, availability of resources, time constraints and more importantly the feedback of the teachers is not taken into consideration. In such contexts where teachers' roles are restricted to the boundaries of the classroom and are not involved in the broader contexts of decision making, the process of materials evaluation can bring about some important issues about the materials used in the ELT classrooms.

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## “The English School”: Hybridisation of Culture and Social Change in Malabar

Vinodan Navath<sup>1</sup> & Ajmal Mueen MA<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Govt. Brennen College, <sup>2</sup>MAMO College, Kerala

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### ABSTRACT

There are many studies on the changes brought about by English education in India. The first are studies that demonstrate how discourses, declarations, speeches, medical treatment, and humanitarian efforts all work. How does it work? contributed to the colonial state's expansion and survival. Such postmodern studies contend that the cultural dominance of the indigenous community is made possible by the mask of English. The second is the conclusion that the educational and linguistic achievements made by the British contributed to the complete transformation of society. Some studies claim that English education aided Asia's development of a hybrid culture. In the context of colonial modernity, the paper analyses how English education influenced the social and cultural landscape of Malabar. The development offered by colonialism and its cultural apparatus in decreasing the grievances of disadvantaged and the people belonging to the backward castes is an important topic to be noticed when analysing the social and economic history of Malabar. English served as a catalyst for the restructuring of Malabar's social and economic structure. European knowledge and philosophy played a crucial role in how people understood socio-cultural reality. In Malabar, a new framework for social mobility has been created by the progress philosophy that came along with it.

### Introduction

In nineteenth-century India, English became the dominant language, and its vitality was felt in all spheres of society. The British state of Malabar, as well as the princely states of Travancore and Cochin, made up Kerala during the colonial era. Malabar was initially directly influenced by colonial modernity because it was a region that the British actively dominated. A new framework for social mobility in Malabar has been created by the progress philosophy that English education brought with it. The evident results of a society shaped by western education included the restructuring of the family unit, urbanisation of the economy, a new understanding of time, and enhanced employment prospects, among other things. According to Marshall Berman, cultural capitalism and modernity's expression have the power to transcend all barriers related to location, ethnicity, class, and nationality.<sup>2</sup> Malabar saw the democratisation of a rigid caste system into a more liberal-minded middle class culture imbued with the ethos of modernity

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [vinodhistgem@gmail.com](mailto:vinodhistgem@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Berman Marshall .1982. *All that is solid melts into air: The experience of Modernity*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

against the backdrop of English education.<sup>3</sup> The British brought the English language, which reached all spheres of society and transcended the limitations set by the dominant native groups. The new language was able to penetrate the local environment from inside and to inspire action, resistance, and liberation. Educating and civilizing colonial subjects in English literature and culture was an imperial purpose, as Gauri noted, one that ultimately served to consolidate western cultural hegemony in incredibly complicated ways.<sup>4</sup> It is argued that colonial encounters did not simply operate through coercion, but also through concessions, contestation and resistance.<sup>5</sup> The study by Naregal demonstrates how colonial control in South Asia changed social hierarchies by changing the nature of the relationship between "high" and "low" languages<sup>6</sup>.

Sir C Sankaran Nair explains the allure of new language and its liveliness in the following manner:

‘Great English authors have been our canon from our school days, and English history is a subject we study in class. The majority of the books we read are English-language works that thoroughly describe all facets of English culture and impart an English-style personality on us all. Weekly, English periodicals, newspapers, and magazines arrive in India for Indian readers. We now lead the lives of the English.’<sup>7</sup>

The middle class's accomplishments within the Tiyya community in Malabar can be used to examine the changes brought about by western education. Less privileged groups in Malabar society, whose current cultural resources were insufficient for eradicating the true root of inequality, passionately responded to the idea that English was the new language of "power." The advancement of lower caste Tiyyas in Malabar suggests the creation of a "community of equals" as a result of absorbing the principles of English education and the economic prospects it produces. A generation of magistrates, educators, authors, nurses, compounders, bankers, clerks, police, supervisors, builders, contactors, site engineers, and officials in the British enterprises emerged from the Tiyya community. Tiyyas were in a better situation than their Ezhava counterparts in south Kerala during the British era. According to Robin Jeffrey, the Tiyyas relative affluence in north Malabar was correlated with their access to land and level of education. They gained a basic understanding of the English language through Missionary schools, and as a result, they had access to colonial institutions and occupations, which helped to dismantle power structures and caste equations in the north Malabar region. In a letter to the Times of India, Bombay High Court Judge Sir Narayan Chanda Varker writes: "I believe that the social reformer who wishes to address the issue of the depressed sections should study the history of Tiyyas in Malabar. They are not exactly a downcast class at the moment. Instead of themselves elevating, they have essentially been lifted. Today, Tiyyas' can be found in every profession and in government institutions<sup>8</sup>. In his trip report on Malabar (1919), Lord Willington mentions Tiyyas' major role in British administrative service. Tiyyas had a significant number of

<sup>3</sup>Kizhakkepattu Ramankutty Menon.2013. *Parangodi Parinayam*, (Mal.Novel), Reprint. Thiruvananthapuram Chintha Publishers. p.27.

<sup>4</sup>Viswanathan,Gauri.1990. *Masks of Conquest: Literary study and British rule in India*.New York:Columbia University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Mamdani, M.1996. *Citizen and Subject*. New Jersey.Princeton University Press.

<sup>6</sup>Naregal, Veena.2004. "Vernacular Culture and Political Formation in Western India",in Abhijit Gupta and Swapan Chakravorty (ed.). New Delhi.Print Book History in India Areas. Permanent Black.

<sup>7</sup> Sankaran,Nair. C.1998.*Autobiography*. Ottappalam. Chettur Sankaran Nair Foundation. p.296.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in *Mitavadi*, Calicut, 30:3, March 1915. p. 6.

positions in the revenue department that paid over Rs 50 per hour. In the Malabar area, there were 31 Tahsildars and Magistrates, and 8 of them were Tiyyas, accounting for 22% of the appointments. Three Tiyyas out of the 24 members of the Calicut Municipal Council, four out of the 17 members in Cannanore, and four out of the 18 members in Tellicherry were Tiyyas.<sup>9</sup> The new status of the Tiyyas had also been acknowledged by the government. A group of Tiyyas from south Canara petitioned the education department in 1903 to have their caste added to the list of "backward castes" under the Grant in Aid Code. One Under Secretary lacked compassion. It is unclear how the Tiyyas of south Canara may be distinguished from those of Malabar, the man stated. "People must be considered backward or not as a class, not based on the neighbourhoods in which they reside. The Tiyyas of Malabar cannot be categorised as being poor or uneducated."<sup>10</sup> The Murkoth family at Thalassery provides a glimpse into the development of Tiyyas around the turn of the twentieth century. The owner of the organisation in charge of all the bars and wine stores in Malabar was Murkoth Ramunni. In the home of a senior employee of the East India Company, his father had served as butler. By getting a western education, the family's second generation was able to prosper. Kumaran, the son of Murkoth Ramunni, began his career as a teacher before going on to become a journalist and short story writer. Murkoth Ramunni, Murkoth Kunhappa, and Murkoth Srinivasan, sons of Murkoth Kumaran, have held notable positions in the Indian Civil Service and in private businesses. According to Weber's argument, the English language became the language of power because of the new class situation, which was determined by the kind of talents and capacities acquired through educational credentials that offer life prospects outside of those associated with direct property ownership.<sup>11</sup> There are accounts that show the lower caste residents of Malabar were now freer than before. Permission to visit the homes of the higher castes was progressively given to the lower castes. Diwan Bahadur E.K. Krishnan, a subordinate judge, speaks highly of the hospitality he received while staying at the Taliparamba, home of his Nair friend Karunakaran Nambiar.<sup>12</sup> Most often, the upper caste families from the lower caste were not welcomed into Nair homes. Giving houses to Tiyyas for rent, as accurately documented by Munsif O. Shankaran in 1920<sup>13</sup> was another occurrence that signalled the removal of caste barriers. Even though they belonged to lower castes, modern medical professionals were allowed to utilise the routes that were set apart for upper castes. With the growth of education, there was a significant easing of the limitations placed on intercommunity marriages. In the past, marital alliances between residents of north and south Malabar were uncommon, but examples of educated adolescents marrying ladies from far-off locales were steadily growing. The marriage of one Choyi, the son of Kannur resident Kattu Kandi Vattam Poyilil Chathukutty, and a woman from Kozhikode was celebrated with considerable pomp and show<sup>14</sup> according to a newspaper source.

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<sup>9</sup> Tour Report of Lord Willingdon. Malabar and South Canara, 2 to 15 October 1919, Government of Madras. p.79. Regional Archives. Kozhikode.

<sup>10</sup> Baker, C.J. and David Wash Brooke. 1975. *South India: Political Institutions and Political Change* (1880-1940). New Delhi. The Macmillan Company of India Limited. p. 180.

<sup>11</sup> Weber, Max. 1978. *Economy and Society*, Volumes 1 and 2, G Roth and C Wittich (ed). Berkeley, University of California Press. p.930.

<sup>12</sup> Murkoth Kunhappa. 1975. *Murkoth Kumaran* (Mal.), Kottayam.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Malayala Manorama*, 20 June 1903, quoted in Murkoth Kunhappa, *Malayala Manorama*, Malayala Manorama Publishing House, Kottayam, 1982, p. 280.

The hegemonic project of education was initially introduced in the 'native home,' in contrast to what the colonists had anticipated. According to Partha Chatterjee's observation, women from the emerging middle class in nineteenth-century India went on to actively participate in the social activities and national movement.<sup>15</sup> The domain of family and the position of women underwent considerable change in the background of western education. Women belonged to a group that had succumbed under the strain of the repressive caste system and the rules that caste imposed on society. Social reform movement in India raised issues like sati, child marriage, female infanticide, and widow remarriage with the help of the educated population. It created a flurry of concerns about women's education, marital reform, and religious practices in Kerala. The advancement of women's education not only helped to instill self-confidence but also gave rise to the group of "career women," who sought employment in specialised fields like teaching, medicine, and various white-collar industries. Some of them began to take on the good housewife duties that the British policymakers had in mind. For instance, the arguments in favour of English education focused on the ideas that women's knowledge of English would make them better homemakers and increase the pleasure of home life, and that women's knowledge of English would increase the pleasure of communication between 'the modern educated' husband and wife, or that it would open up a whole world of books on housewifery, child care, or other womanly skills, or that her mother's English proficiency would influence her.<sup>16</sup> A new patriarchy emerged that was distinct from the established hierarchy while clearly asserting its differences with the 'western family.' The idea of cleanliness, order, punctuality, and household devotions which constitute such remarkable characteristics of a well-kept English middle-class home. The considerable advancements made by educated women at the start of the 20th century were noted in official British reports and contemporary Malabar literature. It may be seen in the emergence of numerous women's groups like Vanitha Samajams, Strivedi's, Mahila sangams, etc. in different regions of Malabar. A Stree Samajam at Thalassery is mentioned by Murkoth Kunhappa in the prelude to Sahasra Poornima of Revathi Amma.<sup>17</sup> It carried out social activities as well as book deliveries to women's homes. There were publications of women's magazines, as well as essays, caricatures, and writings about the empowerment of women in newspapers and journals. The topics related to women were covered in separate columns. The topics related to women were covered in separate columns. Malabar housewives were informed about the political and social climate of the day by the strong influence of print capitalism in their homes.

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<sup>15</sup> Chatterjee, Partha. 1995. *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonialism and Post-Colonial Histories*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. p.9

<sup>16</sup> Ammukutty Amma, "Nammalude Streekalum English Vidyabhyasavum" in *Sharada*, vol 2(3), 1905-06, pp 50-52, quoted in J. Devika, *op.cit.* p.82.

<sup>17</sup> Murkoth Kunhappa, Preface to C.K Revathi Amma's *Sahasrapoornima*, SPSS, Kottayam, 1977, p.III.





*Source: Mathrubhumi weekly 1933, August 7.*

The cartoon, which was published in *Mathrubhumi* weekly,<sup>18</sup> mocks the current situation of men while demonstrating the general advancement made by women at the turn of the twentieth century.

The institution of the family and individual property rights underwent a significant reorientation in the context of colonialism and the cultural changes it brought about. The family structure was altered to accommodate individual rights to property and education in the 19th century by the expansion of English education, the emergence of a new middle class, and socioeconomic reforms. The coherence and unity of the taravads (ancestral home) were seriously weakened by the emergence of the money economy and the socioeconomic upheavals that followed. The traditional family structure was changed by government enactments. Government workers had to live in far-off locations since they were regularly reassigned. They then shared a home with their wife and kids as a single family. When they came home, these individuals discovered that it was difficult for them to fit into a regular joint family, therefore they began to live independently. According to the President's Supplementary Memorandum to the Malabar Marriage Commission, the advent of modern education and employment, which they were followed by, has seriously weakened the existing customs and family practices. Previously, the wife and kids resided in her taravad and the father was not expected to take care of the kids. But their new sense of being bound by a separate home and family caused their perception to change. The three main concerns in north Malabar right now were class, political unrest, and agrarian reforms. While jobs and education helped lower caste families become more prosperous, upper caste taravads in north Malabar served as a setting for personal disputes and partition lawsuits. According to Robin Jeffrey, the rise of public education, particularly in schools, and the expansion of government employment prospects in the second half of the 19th century were the

<sup>18</sup> *Mathrubhumi* Weekly, 6 August 1933

causes of disagreements and partition lawsuits in the last three decades of the century.<sup>19</sup> Junior members attempted to file complaints with lesser courts to get them resolved. Additionally, repeated requests for compensation were made to the colonial state. Dissenting voices from the Mappila community also opposed the Marumakkatayam system. As an example, E.K. Moulavi, the head of the Aikya Sangam, declared explicitly that ‘the system is forbidden in Islam, and it is an accretion from Hinduism.’ It shatters Islam's sense of brotherhood and solidarity<sup>20</sup>. The Malabar Marriage Commission, which the British created in 1891, held serious discussions on several topics, including current marriage customs, inheritance laws, property relationships, the status of women, demands of *anatharavans* (nephew) and western education. The claims made by the English-educated middle class about current marriage customs and customary rights sparked contentious arguments. Chandu Menon, a member of the Marriage Commission, asserted that most Malabar residents, including the nobility, were opposed to any changes to the region's traditional marriage and inheritance customs.<sup>21</sup> The same issue was construed in favour of women by C. Sankaran Nair, president of INC in its Amaravathi session. He emphasised how the current family structure enables the karanavar (uncle), who takes all the property's income and gives it to his own wife and kids, absolute authority.<sup>22</sup> The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 was passed as a direct result of these deliberations and public battles, which was a huge relief to the Marumakkatayam adherents of Malabar. Their males were given the chance to start their own families, and the girls were given the chance to join their husband's family. Additionally, new organisations, like the Registration of Marriages, were founded. The Matriliny Bill, introduced in 1931 and passed into law in 1933, declared that matrilineal taravads was “no longer the focus” of Nair life and that “the social stream was flowing along more natural channels.” The Madras Marumakkatayam Act of 1933 established marriage as a legal institution, provided for an unrestricted right to divorce, upheld monogamy, and, most importantly, gave each individual the ability to claim a portion of the taravad estate through the partition of taravads. Individual independence in the Nambudiri community was guaranteed by the Madras Nambudiri Act of 1933.

The British enactments and social reforms followed by it had a significant impact and increased social mobility in Malabar. Some of the more affluent Marumakkatayam families, such as the Koyas and Baramis of Kozhikode and the Keyis of Thalassery, supported the new "change" and attempted to reform ceremonial and matrimonial customs in accordance with Ahammedi and Islahi beliefs. For instance, Nifiza Beevi, the daughter of Abdul Khader Kutty, the first Ahmadi adherent in Kannur, was married to an Ahmadi. No additional rites were held at the nikah, and unlike other Mappilas, no dowry was provided.<sup>23</sup> By arranging interfaith marriages, certain youth organisations, such as Nambudiri Yuvajana Sangam, attempted to dissolve caste distinctions. One unconventional union was that of Uma Antharjanam, a widow and Mullamangalath Raman Bhattatiripad (MRB). Elites and educated young people from many

<sup>19</sup> Jeffrey, Robin .1992. *Politics, Women and Well-Being-How Kerala Become a Model*. MacMillan Press limited, New Delhi. p.164.

<sup>20</sup> E.K. Moulavi, ‘Kerala Muslim and Anti-Islamic Rituals’ in E.M.Habeeb Muhammad(ed.) *Sahrudayopaharam* Edava,1930, pp.155-64.

<sup>21</sup> Devasia, Anitha. *Indulekha* (trans.), New Delhi, Oxford University Press. p. 248.

<sup>22</sup> Sankaran Nair. C. 1966. *Autobiography*, Published by Lady Madhavan Nair, Madras. p.62.

<sup>23</sup> The Islahis and Ahmadis put emphasis on strict adherence to Koran, advocated patrilocality and denounced stridhanam. Their social agenda included women education, their entry into mosques, a modern system of Arabic education, the translation of Koran and the condemnation of saint worship.



parts of Kerala attended the marriage function.<sup>24</sup> VT. Battatiripad delivered the felicitation speech. The couples received a Mangala Patram from Bhattatiripad. A public gathering was also scheduled. Parvathi Nemmini Mangalam noted the revolutionary changes that occurred in Nambudiri life because of education and reformer actions in an article titled “Purappeduka MRByude Velikku” that was published in Mathrubhumi Daily on September 4, 1934, only days before the wedding.<sup>25</sup> “Nambudiris achieved a scale of social progress that is beyond even progressive people among other caste groups in the Hindu community,” she remarked. The marriage of Raghavan Panikkar, a Nair youth, and Parvathi Antarajanam, a sister of V.T. Bhattatiripad, was celebrated as a secular occasion in May 1940 by eschewing all religious customs and rites.<sup>26</sup> The marriage ceremony took place in K. Kelappan's presence. Even the interactions between the lower and higher castes underwent transformation because of western education and the new economic opportunities it offered. For instance, in former times, a lower caste man would refer to a higher caste man as a Tamburan, Tambran, Eman, etc. Even an elderly man was required to use the proper honorifics while speaking to a small kid from a higher caste. High caste individuals used *Eda*, *Nee*, *Than*, and other pronouns to address a low caste guy. It was not appropriate to refer to members of lower castes as *Eda*, *Nee*, etc. when they were employed as clerks or teachers and were financially independent of others. In the future, they would be addressed according to their rank, such as Writer, Munsif, Vakil, Master, Adhikari, Gumastan, Amin, Constable, etc. Menon observed the mindset of the educated middle class in relation to their traditional duties in the altered circumstance. The lower caste people's attainment of education was correlated with a departure from the social obligations that were expected of them to uphold. For instance, Tiyya tenants in Palayad, close to Tellicherry, declined to fulfil the customary task of serving as messengers who would deliver the news of the Nayar landowner's passing. When a member of a Nayar landowner's family passed away, Tiyya tenants were frequently asked to cut down a mango tree for the funeral pyre. Around Tellicherry and Kannur, Tiyyas grew increasingly disinclined to uphold their customary caste duties.<sup>27</sup>

With the rise of schools as a new public arena against the backdrop of colonial modernity, certain significant modifications in the Malabar region's dress pattern emerged. The school system and associated social and cultural transformations brought about significant changes in the way people dressed. People's idea of modest attire was assisted to grow by education. As noted by Ellen Roach and Joanne Bubluz Eicher, the clothing and accessories express social distinctions and cultural identities in addition to serving practical purposes.<sup>28</sup> Although there is no universal code across cultures that governs this articulation, conventions and practices in the West and East are very diverse, and apparel frequently plays an active role in social connections.<sup>29</sup> Up to the end of the 19th century, Malabar's clothes and decorations functioned to denote social hierarchy and distinction. Most members of low caste groups and converts were prohibited from covering the upper half of their bodies. In the Nair taravads, it was customary to distribute clothing to each member of the taravad twice a year, on Onam and Visu. Men received tuni (cloth used as pants), pudava (double cloth), and neryatu (upper garment), while women

<sup>24</sup> Mathrubhumi Daily, 15 September 1934.

<sup>25</sup> Mathrubhumi Daily, 4 September 1934.

<sup>26</sup> Mathrubhumi, 23 May 1940.

<sup>27</sup> Menon, Dilip. M. 2007. *Caste Nationalism and Communism*. in South India: Malabar 1900-1948. Cambridge. p.70.

<sup>28</sup> Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne Bubluz Eicher (ed.). 1965 *Dress, Adornment and Social Order*, New York, 1965.

Quoted in K.N. Panikkar. 2007. *Colonialism Culture and Resistance*. New Delhi. Oxford University Press.

<sup>29</sup> Panikkar. K.N. 2007. *Colonialism Culture and Resistance*. New Delhi. Oxford University Press. p.105.

received konakam (loin cloth used as an underwear), mundu (dhoti), and tortu (towel). As Kuppayam (blouse) did not adhere to the conventionally approved pattern of attire for ladies, no Kuppayam was provided from family funds.<sup>30</sup> An English-educated administrator named Murkoth Ramunni attested to the shift in dress style against the backdrop of colonial modernity: 'Children used to come to school in their loincloths (Konakam) in the Kudipallikoodams, but it was forbidden in English schools. I went to the school, where we wrote numbers while sitting on the ground and spreading sand on it. My friends solely wore dhotis and lacked shirts. However, the way that school staff and students dressed changed when English-language instruction was introduced. Headmasters began pressuring the teachers to arrive at class dressed in an English suit.'<sup>31</sup>

New food items started to become popular among the educated class when Sweet Houses first arose in Kerala's largest cities, they had the potential to shatter the social norms governing the consumption of food by the underclass. A labourer who worked primarily in paddy fields may replace his two daily meals of Kanhi (rice soup) with *puttu* and *dosa* from tea and coffee shops. A new drinking culture is emerging in south India against the backdrop of colonial modernity, according to Venkatachalapathy. The simplest way to welcome someone was to just say, "Let's have some coffee," and to indicate that one would not even give a cup of coffee to guests was the ultimate insult.<sup>32</sup>

A few novels that were written in the 1870s give a good indication of this change in the North Malabar region. For instance, Kizhakkepattu Raman Kutty Menon's work *Parangodi Parinayam* describes how the educated class is changing their eating and lifestyle patterns. Tea, cookies, cakes, and other foods became staples of the middle class family. With the creation of Mampally Bakery by Karai Bapu, "Colonial taste" made an appearance in a town like Thalasseri. In contrast to coffee, which became associated with the middle class, tea was considered a working class beverage. Coffee and tea consumption is quickly replacing the traditional morning ritual of drinking kanhi, or cold rice water. Due to the growing use of tea and coffee, new hotels and local-run tea shops have appeared in towns and villages. The middle class was attempting to express its own conscience while being educated in contemporary schools, employed in colonialism-related positions, and rapidly gravitating towards Madras and other presidential towns. They were accustomed to smoking, and drinking alcohol had become widespread in metropolitan areas. Throughout the words of Daniel Roche, "Tobacco spread like wicked fire in India from Kanyakumari to the Himalayas," he describes this transformation.

The second part of the 19th century saw the writing of novels like *Indulekha*, *Saraswathi Vijayam*, *Sukumari*, and *Parangodi Parinayam* by western educated authors. These works are reflections of a rational mind anxious to chronicle the life of Malabar in the context of colonialism. *Indulekha*, an 1889 publication, makes the effects of interactions between the indigenous and western cultures more apparent. *Indulekha* was written, according to Chandu Menon, at the request of some of his pals who were anxious to hear the plots of English books. The novelist noted that *Indulekha's* proficiency in English was the one characteristic that distinguished her from other Nair ladies of the time. To demonstrate how a young Malayalee

<sup>30</sup> Rao, MSA. 1957. *Social Change in Malabar*. Bombay. The Popular Book Depot. p77.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Murkoth Ramunni at his residence at Dharmadam on 8/11/2008.

<sup>32</sup> Venkatachalapathy, AR. 2006. *In Those Days There was no Coffee: Writings in Cultural History*. New Delhi. YODA Press. p. 28

woman would behave in situations of utmost importance to her, such as choosing a life partner, the author writes: “One of my objectives in writing this book is to illustrate how a young Malayalee woman, possessing in addition to her natural personal charms and intellectual culture, a knowledge of English language. I have thought it necessary that my Indulekha should be conversant with the richest language of the world.” The book *Saraswathivijayam* compares the opportunities for success provided by traditional and modern civilizations and points to western education and missionary work as ways for low caste individuals to escape subjugation. The novel *Sukumari* attempts to confront new forms of self, family, society, and occupational pattern in the Malabar region against the backdrop of new cultural projects presented by Christianity and colonial modernity. It illustrates the interactions between missionaries and the lower caste inhabitants of north Malabar and sends the message that everything is safe if one becomes a Christian and pursues an education in English. We encounter two groups of characters in these books: one represents traditional order and the other colonial modernity. Madhavan and Indulekha are two examples of people who have a strong foundation in traditional knowledge while also absorbing Western cultural traits. By mentioning his interest in foreign cultures, practices, and manners, his familiarity with western sports like lawn tennis, cricket, and athletics, and most importantly his proficiency in English. Madhavan establishes his identity with western culture. Indulekha also has a strong foundation in Sanskrit, music, and English. She gained proficiency in the piano, violin, and Indian lute in addition to learning harmony theory. Panchu Menon, Kesavan Nambutiri, Suri Nambutiripad, Lakshmikutty Amma, and Govinda Panikkar, who stands in for the established order, are other notable characters in the book. These two sets of characters have competing interests. For instance, Madhavan has the audacity to confront his karanavar Panchu Menon about his refusal to ‘spend’ money on enrolling a youngster named Shinnan, who is distantly related, in school. Confrontation can also be seen in the conversation between Govinda Panikkar, Govindan Kutty, and Madhavan, which expresses the worry of the older generation about the decline of morals and religious belief against the backdrop of growing materialism and atheism of western philosophies fostered by English education. Two significant characters are introduced in the book *Saraswathi Vijayam*: Marathan, a Pulaya kid, and Subadra, a Nambutiri woman. It discusses the transformations that occurred in both of these characters' lives as a result of their defiance of social conventions and conversion to Christianity. Marathan was forced to leave his hometown after being thrashed by Darutty, the Nambudiri Jenmi's Nambiar steward, for performing a song. He accepted the name Yesudasan as a sign of his conversion to Christianity and enrolled in a missionary school in Anjarakandy to study English. The narrative of Styarty (Raman), who became a Christian and left his hometown, and Sukumari (Chirutha), who attended Basel Mission School, is told in the book *Sukumari*. Sukumari, the heroine with an English education, is portrayed as the personification of love, affection, and humanitarianism. She also receives respect from others. Satyarthi, who received his education at the Basel Mission School and developed his profession in Bourbon Island and Australia, is a representative of the Malayali population who work for colonial businesses to make their fortunes abroad. Another significant character in the book, Tejo Palan, makes an effort to live out the missionary principles of hard work. We encounter a different facet of English education in *Parangodi Parinayam*. The novel's author, Kizhakkepattu Raman Kutty Menon, introduces three significant characters: Pangassa Menon, the protagonist; Parangodi, the heroine; and one Parangodan. The novel illustrates the cultural gap between those who have received an education in England and others who have learned through tradition through these characters. The arrival of colonial modernism in the towns and its surroundings is also shown in these novels, which

also highlight personal successes through English education. Novels like *Sukumari* give a thorough account of the city of Kannur's gradual transformation into a global hub. The landscape of Kannur is described, paying particular attention to the fort, army, barracks, armoury, camp bazaar, and Payyambalam beach. Additionally, it refers to many north Malabar trading communities, including the Parsis, Gujarat Sethis, and Baniyas. The major setting of the book is Barnassery, a multicultural village where Portuguese, Anglo Indians, and locals coexist. The work also discusses how Malayalee customs changed in the colonial setting. For instance, the novel's protagonist *Sukumari* mentions the bad habits of the newly emerging middle class in her talk with her lover *Satyadas*. Some of them are making an effort to mimic British speech and attire. Others adopt English names that are variations of their family names. For instance, *Vasu* becomes *D'Vaz*, *Raman* becomes *Raymond*, *Atchison* becomes *Achuthan*, *Perayan* becomes *Pereira*, etc. Another element of the book that is shown as a component of modernity is 'cleanliness.' *Sukumari*, for instance, had a complete paradigm shift when she visited the home of *Karuna*, a fictional English-educated woman. *Sukumari* was taken aback by the cleanliness of the home and has since tried to implement it in her own life.

### **Conclusion**

The discussions enable us to make the following conclusions about the potential of western education to foster significant mobility in a society that is strongly rooted in tradition. The inventions of literacy, political self-awareness, the novel, the political press, reading societies, saloons, and coffee houses in the nineteenth century created in Malabar an interdependent public sphere, as referred to by Habermas. Malabar experienced a very slow transition from the caste and ritual spheres to the public sphere. Public spheres formed in connection with festivals, religious institutions and processions were later transformed into public spheres. The colonial modernity that developed prior to western education overcame elements like local concepts, dress, sense of taste, and regional considerations that were given to caste, and a common sphere gradually developed in Malabar. Caste concepts based on physical boundaries on land started to fade, especially with the development of railroads. Later, biscuits and cakes were used as a political tool to combat caste ideas. The low caste people were helped to cross over the physical barriers of religious spaces, and they were exposed to contemporary capitalist ideas. The introduction of novel concepts in science, technology, and medicine put traditional notions of work, education, and social interaction under pressure. Technology advancements like the printing press were crucial in democratising knowledge and making printed books easily accessible in any language that the average person could read. The region's caste and communal dynamics have changed because of the introduction of western education and the subsequent increase in occupational mobility. The identity of a person is now determined by their occupation and education credentials rather than their *jati* (caste). The government's passage of laws and an increase in the educated class's demand for institutional change resulted in the breakdown of matrilineal taravads (family) in Malabar. Under colonial modernity and education, significant changes were made to marriage customs, eating habits, clothing patterns, social obligations, and leisure activities.

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## A Sociolinguistic Study of Caste Prejudices in Bhojpuri Proverbs

*Saroj Kumar<sup>1</sup>*

*Central University of South Bihar*

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### ABSTRACT

The Caste (loosely a combination of Varna and Jati) system is a social reality in India which is rooted in the Vedic period. However, it has kept on changing with the passage of time. One of the problems that the caste system has created is the feudal structure and consequently hierarchy in society. The intensity of caste-based discrimination was at its zenith in the colonial period because the colonizers made intentional efforts to further intensify the discrimination and hatred among different caste groups to keep the people of India divided. After the independence the government of India has taken several measures to bridge the rift between several castes and India has witnessed a positive change in removing caste-based discrimination to an extent. It can be seen as a good initial step in establishing an egalitarian society. However, it is difficult to eradicate the deep-rooted biases and prejudices related to caste in the near future. Proverbs are one of the good sources for understanding caste dynamics in India. The present study tries to understand caste-based discrimination and evils in the Bhojpuri language community through Bhojpuri proverbs. An effort has been made to select the proverbs related to caste from the corpus of Bhojpuri proverbs. The textual analysis of the selected proverbs has been done. The analysis provides the extent to which people were and are divided on the basis of caste and what sort of relative perception they have of one another.

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### Introduction

The Caste (loosely a combination of Varna and Jati) system is a social reality in India which is rooted in the Vedic period, particularly the concept of Varna (Basham, 1954, p. 148). The concept of Varna literally means colour, order or class (Stanton, 2012, p. 12-13). In the Vedic period, there were four Varnas; the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and the Shudras (Fowler, 1997, p. 19-20). However, these four categories did not cover all the people because there were a few groups who never became a part of the so-called mainstream of society, particularly the Dalits and the tribes who were considered the untouchables (Bayly, 2001, p. 09). The concept of Jami is a further subdivision of the Varnas which literally means (by) birth (Fowler, 1997, p. 23). It came quite late after the Varna system and there is no factual and scientific account available about how it originates (Ambedkar, 2023, p. 100-124). However, the caste system has kept on changing with the passage of time. One of the problems that the caste system has created is the feudal structure and consequently hierarchy in society. It is a system driven by inequality, exploitation, injustice, etc. Social exclusion has been the fundamental feature of the caste system in India. According to Ambedkar, the caste system in India has been

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [posttosaroj@gmail.com](mailto:posttosaroj@gmail.com)

Brahminic, Hindu-centric and cultural, and it is greatly responsible for the marginalization of a large section of society in India (Ambedkar, 2023, p. 92-99).

The post-colonial view is that the intensity of caste-based discrimination was at its zenith in the colonial period because the colonizers made intentional efforts to further intensify the discrimination and hatred among different caste groups to keep the people divided (Tharoor, 2016, p. 131-132). The colonizers formalized the caste system into their governance system by providing administrative jobs and senior posts only to the upper castes of Hindu Indians (Dirks, 2001, p. 215–229).

After the independence, the government of India along with the state governments has taken several measures to bridge the rift between several castes. By acknowledging the caste-based discrimination, such communities (like, Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and Other Backward Class) were given reservations in different sectors. India has witnessed a positive change in removing caste-based discrimination to an extent because of these measures. It can be seen as a good initial step in establishing an egalitarian society. However, it is difficult to eradicate the deep-rooted biases and prejudices related to caste in the near future. The caste-based discriminations, biases and prejudices are still pervasive in Indian society.

One of the ways through which the present and the past of the caste-based discriminations, biases and prejudices can be understood is the proverbs. Proverbs are one of the good sources for understanding the dynamics of the caste system in India. It is very difficult to define a proverb because of its cultural and linguistic variations. I think in order to have a basic understanding of what proverb is Mieder's definition will be apt. According to Mieder, "A proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, and memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation" (Mieder, 1993, p. 05).

The present study tries to understand caste-based discriminations, biases, prejudices and evils in the Bhojpuri language community through Bhojpuri proverbs. Bhojpuri is one of the Indo-Aryan languages (of the Indo-European language family) spoken in a few states of northern India. It is spoken by around 5% of the population of India as its mother tongue (Frawley, 2003, p. 481). However, its speakers live across the country and across the globe. Bhojpuri is also spoken by minority groups in Fiji, Guyana, Mauritius, South Africa, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago (Mesthrie, 2019, p. 30-32). Bhojpuri is mutually intelligible to a great extent to Hindi, Maithili, Maghadhi, etc. For example, Bhojpuri songs and Films are popular among the speakers of all its mutually intelligible languages. Therefore, the study has a relatively better research scope. The other thing that increases the scope of this study is that proverbs are similar across the languages that share the same culture.

### **Methodology**

The study uses a cross-sectional research design and qualitative research strategy. The Bhojpuri proverbs related to caste have been selected from a book (Tiwari, 2000). The Book has been published by the government of Bihar (a state of India where the maximum number of Bhojpuri speakers lives). However, only the proverbs that reflect deep-rooted caste discriminations, biases and prejudices have been taken into account for analysis. The sampling method is a combination of convenience sampling method and purposive or judgmental sampling method. The textual analysis and the 'critical discourse analysis' of the selected proverbs have been done (Fairclough, 1995). The analysis has been done with the perspective of finding out the extent to which people



were and are divided on the basis of caste and what sort of relative perception they have of one another. The study focuses on how a caste is perceived and treated by the people of other castes. One of the objectives of the research is to find out how the social hierarchy has been maintained with the help of the caste system. The analysis of the proverbs has been arranged in descending order in terms of the percentage of populations of the particular caste. The percentage of Bihar Caste Census, 2022 has been used.

### **Analysis and interpretation of the data**

In order to have a better understanding of analysis of the select proverbs, I think one more concept should be introduced here which is “Forward Caste or the Upper Caste” (Gupta, 2010, p. 119). The number of castes in this group is relatively less and altogether they share around 15-20% of the Indian population (The exact data is not available since no caste census has been conducted after independence. However, in the 2011 census, the populations of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes were taken into consideration). The people who belong to the “Forward Caste” have been enjoying a large chunk of national resources together with special privileges because of the Varna system of the Hindu religion. They have also been responsible for the exploitation and marginalization of the non-forward castes. Even though lots of measures have been taken by the government (both the centre and the states) still they dominate in some of the lucrative and powerful posts and positions, for example, the education sector, Indian Administrative Services, Defence, Mass Media, etc. Let us look at some of the major castes and the select proverbs about them.

**Yadav:** It is the largest caste in terms of population as per the Bihar caste survey, 2022 in Bihar. It comes under non-upper caste and non-elite groups (Bayly, 2001, p. 200). Traditionally their professions have been farming and animal husbandry. There are many sub-castes of *Yadav* like, *Ahir*, *Gop*, *Kannaujia*, *Goria*, etc. Let us look at the first proverb.

अहीर बुझावे से ही मरद । (*A man is the one who makes Ahir aware of the facts.*)

First of all, the proverb is sexist but we will not cover this aspect here since it is beyond the scope of this study (I have already started working on this aspect). If you take the literal meaning of the proverb, it means those who are *Yadav* are brainless and stupid. However, in most cases, the proverbs are used in a metaphorical sense. Even in the metaphorical sense, it remains offensive but it is told on a lighter note and significantly reduces the offensiveness. One of the probable reasons behind this notion is that the *Yadavas* traditionally remained aloof from education and intellectual discussions. They used to do physical labour in their profession. Let us look at another proverb about them.

एक तः अहीर, दोसरे जबान, तीसरे हो गइल नौ मन धान । (*One is Ahir, secondly he is young and thirdly he is born with nine quintals of paddy; Then he will definitely show strength and glory.*)

Like the previous proverb, this one too is offensive. The proverb suggests *Yadav* becomes further problematic (maybe for other castes) if they have physical power along with wealth. It shows that *Yadav* traditionally used to be poor and if a few of them got wealthy they may show their vain and proud nature. Like all the select proverbs for this study, the proverb shows a negative perception of one caste about other castes.

कतनो अहीरा होय सयाना, लोरिक छाड़ि ना गावहि आना । (*However clever an Ahir may be, he will not sing anything except 'Lorik'.*) (*Veer Lorik is a divine mythological character of the legend of the Ahir of eastern Uttar Pradesh*)

Like the first proverb, this one too tries to project people of the *Yadav* caste as brainless, stupid and uneducated. It questions their ability to compete probably with the forward castes. It shows that even if they try to educate themselves, they cannot match or come even near to the intellectual level of the upper castes. The concept of caste is based on birth. The proverb also tries to sustain and maintain the traditional upper caste narrative that only they are born with good IQ and merit (to learn new things). The other possible interpretation is that they are unwilling to learn anything new, except their own things.

साँवाँ खेती अहीर मीत, कबो कबो होखे हीत । (*The cultivation of 'Sawan' (Indian barnyard millet) and the Ahir as a friend, these two are sometimes our own.*)

The proverb shows how people of other castes consider *Yadav* as untrustworthy. They are suspicious about their trustworthiness. Proverbs suggest how people had or still have a sense of disbelief and unreliability for the other caste people. It shows lack of trust among them.

**Dusad:** It is the second largest caste in Bihar. The people of this caste were untouchables in the Hindu caste hierarchy. In the Bhojpuri region, the *Dusadhs* traditionally often do *chowkidari* (watchman) and agricultural labour. Let us look at the proverbs.

दुसाध के खोभाड़ि, कहीं गाँव बसेला? (*Is there a village somewhere around the huts of Dusadh?*)

This proverb is one of the best pieces of evidence of untouchability in the Indian caste system. However, the concept of untouchability is no longer available in the crude traditional form. The severity of untouchability has gone down significantly and it is in practice sporadically because of the strict laws, awareness, spread of education, etc. The sense of hatred, biases and prejudices towards the “untouchables” and the “lower castes” are still prevalent in the minds of a large number of the upper castes people and quite frequently one can observe discriminatory practices against the untouchables in media reports in India. The untouchable castes were not allowed to live in the village along with the other castes, particularly with the upper castes. They used to live separately outside the village in small huts or mud houses. Mostly the tradition is still prevalent with certain changes.

दुसाध जात खाये नीचे, ताके ऊँचे । (*The Dusadh caste eats sitting down (at others' place), but his eyes keep running to the higher places of the house (i.e., Dusadhs keep sneaking into other's houses to steal).*)

One of the common patterns that can be observed here is that these proverbs try to label the entire people of a caste with certain offensive and/or criminal traits. For example, the proverb tries to generalize that the people who belong to the *Dusadh* community are thieves. The effort is to limit a type of criminal activity to one particular caste. It is difficult to find any logical reason for such labeling.

**Chamar** (*Ravidas Mochi, Rohidas, Charmkar*): The people of this caste are traditionally associated with leather work as the name of the caste also suggests (Hunt, 2014, p. 23). They too were considered untouchable in the Hindu society. They had and still have an important

contribution to the economic and cultural life of the society. They manufacture many implements for agricultural works. On the occasions of marriages, they used to and to an extent still entertain the society with instruments like drums, trumpets, etc. They used to get dead animals, grains and *neg-dastur* (gifts) as remuneration in the past. Now their financial and social status has improved significantly. Two proverbs related to caste have been selected for discussion.

जोलहा के आई-पाई, चमरा के बिहान । (*If a weaver assures to give cloth soon and a Chamar asks to make shoes on the next day, then also their words should not be believed.*)

In comparison with the previous proverbs the expletive mileage of the proverb is significantly less. The interesting aspect is that it is used for anyone who does not deliver things on time or who is not punctual in performing his or her professional duties. It means procrastination and delay is a negative personality trait and the proverb tries to associate this habit with a few castes who are untouchables. When anyone delays in his or her work, the proverb can be used in a generic metaphorical sense to, a sort of, insult them. It means a caste name is used as a taboo or abusive word.

करिया बाभन, गोर चमार, कायर छतरी महा हतियार । (*The black Brahmin, the fair cobbler and the cowardly Kshatriya are great murderers.*)

As it has been mentioned earlier, some of the Bhojpuri proverbs are not only casteist but also racist and sexist. This proverb is both racist and casteist. *Brahmins* are generally relatively fair in complexion because they do not do hard work physically. Consequently, they are not exposed to the sun whereas the untouchables and the “lower caste” people are more exposed to the sun and their complexion is black. However, these are not the only reasons behind skin colour. The proverb tries to stereotype not only certain human traits but also skin colour in terms of caste. *Kshatriyas* are supposedly considered brave. It shows how the positive personality traits have cleverly been associated with the upper castes people.

**Brahmins:** They enjoy the highest place in the caste hierarchy in Hindu society (Wren, 2004, p. 77). Their share in the Indian population is around 3-5% and in the state of Bihar, their percentage is 3.6575%. In the world of proverbs, the *Brahmins* are described as a greedy priest, glutton, and religious fanatic.

तीन कनुजिया तेरह चूल्हा । (*Thirteen hearths are required between the three Kanyakubja Brahmins to cook.*)

The reason for this is that *Kanyakubj* (one of the sub-castes of Brahmin) had and to some extent still has the idea of untouchability in food and drink not only with other castes but also along with his own caste. They did not eat food prepared by other castes since they used to consider people of other castes impure (religiously). Apart from this fact, the above proverb also indicates the rules and restrictions related to food mentioned in the Hindu scriptures. In the past, inter-caste dining was prohibited because of hierarchy (primarily because of religious reasons).

बाभन कुकुर भाँट जाति जाति के काट । (*Brahmin, dog and Bhant--bite the self-caste (i.e. envy the self-caste)*)

In the above proverb the two castes, namely *Brahmin* and *Bhant*, have been compared with a dog. It sounds highly offensive to address any community as a dog. It is not used in a

generic sense. It is used only for the castes it addresses. Brahmins used to and some extent still are also considered cunning and deceitful among *non-Brahmin* castes. Traditionally, *Brahmins* were educated and they were intellectuals.

**Rajput:** It has been the heroic and ruling caste of India. There is no unanimity among the scholars regarding the origin and development of this caste. Nevertheless, almost all the scholars are unanimous in the fact that due to political upheavals in this caste there have been many changes. At present, there are many branches and genealogies of *Rajputs* in North India. *Rajputs* in the Bhojpuri region have their main livelihood in agriculture, industry and other jobs. Since this “upper caste” has been in power, there is no derogatory and discriminatory proverb available about them. However, there are some proverbs available for them where they have been glorified. For example:

रजपूत जात मूसर के धनुही, टूटे तऽ टूटे नवे ना कबहीं । (*The Rajput caste is like a mouse's bow. Therefore, it is possible to break it; But don't bow down.*)

Since there are many stories in history where some *Rajput* rulers have shown their valour and they fought like heroes. The proverb tries to maintain the narrative that the *Rajput* are the bravest community and they never surrender before their enemy. It means they prefer to die to surrender. However, this is not completely true; history has evidence that they have compromised and surrendered. For example, there were many *Rajput* rulers who were in close relationships with the Mughal emperors and they served them in different capacities (Richards, 1995, p. 22-24). Their support helped the Mughals to lay the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India. (Chaurasia, 2002, p. 272-73).

**Kurmi:** It is an agrarian caste and their financial condition has not been bad. *Kurmi* is described as a hardworking and selfish caste in Bhojpuri proverbs. Let us look at a few proverbs.

बनले मल्ल बिगरले कुरमी । (*If they have become (have wealth), then they will be called by the title of Malla, but If they have become poor, then they will be called Kurmi.*)

पत्थर पर जब जामे गुरमी तबहु न होखे आपन कुरमी । (*Even if it is possible to take birth of Gurm' (a creeper of Kakri's lineage) on a stone, still it is impossible for Kurmi to be one's own.*)

Both the above proverbs about *Kurmi* are derogatory in nature. The first one tries to link poverty to *Kumris*. In other words, it tries to stereotype all members of this caste as poor. The word *Kurmi* is synonymous with poverty in a derogatory sense. The second proverb tries to label all the members of the caste as unfaithful and unreliable. The purpose of such proverbs is to stereotype them as unfriendly and unsocial people. The ultimate goal was to keep them socio-economically deprived with the help of these narratives.

**Koiri:** It is a laborious agricultural caste and they primarily grow vegetables. *Koiri* makes even an inch of nearby land green by whipping it. However, this caste does not have much land. They make their living by planting vegetables in only a few small pieces of land they have or they take small pieces of land on rent.

कोइरी के लरिका जनमें के हीन, हाथ में खुरपा मोथा बीन । (*Koiri's son is mean/low by birth. He weeds Mothe (a grass) from the beginning with a spade in his hand.*)

One of the problems with the caste system is that it is based on birth. It does not matter how well-read and intellectual a person is, s/he will not be able to change her/his caste. Unlike the class system, there is no mobility in the caste system either upward or downward. The above proverb tries to justify and sustain the caste hierarchy by propagating that all the people who belong to this caste will remain untouchables or mean or stupid because they were born in the caste.

**Dom:** This caste has been accepted by ethnologists as a branch originating from nomadic and non-Aryan castes. *Magahia domes* are found in the western part of Bihar and the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh. They perform duty at the time of cremation. They used to make and still most of them make and sell rural containers and pots with bamboo. They were and to some extent still are among the untouchable castes.

डोम के जनते धोबी नीच । (*According to the Doms, the washer-men are the ones who do the lowest work. That is why, Doms do not accept food touched by the hands of the washer-man.*)

The proverb is an example of hierarchy and untouchability in the caste system. It is also an example of intra-caste discrimination and untouchability among the lower castes. However, in the caste hierarchy, the Doms are junior to the washer-man. It is also used in the metaphorical sense where it is similar to an English proverb, “to carry coal to Newcastle”.

**Muslims:** It is a religious group in India but it has also been taken into consideration because the caste system does exist among Muslims too. However, there is no caste system in Islam but most of the Indian Muslims were converted from Hinduism to Islam. The number of Muslims in the Bhojpur area is not large. The Muslims do not have a complex caste system like the Hindu caste system. Nevertheless, on the basis of blood purification and related taboos, some classes have also been formed among Indian Muslims. There is a sense of mutual seniority among them. The Muslims of the *Syed* clan consider themselves to be the descendants of Muhammad. Therefore, they call themselves superior to other Muslims. In general, on the basis of social status, Muslims can be divided into these five castes or classes: *Shaikh*, *Syed*, *Mughal*, *Pathan* and other professional classes (weavers, *dhuniyas*, *hajams*, tailors, *kujada*, etc.). The caste system among the Muslims is flexible. Muslims and Hindus co-exist in the villages of the Bhojpur region. However, due to some fundamental differences between the religions and mutual intolerance arising out of historical reasons, the idea of discrimination between the two religions sometimes takes birth. Hindus often call every Muslim 'Turk'. This indicates that in the subconscious mind of the Hindus, that period of history remains alive when the Turks propagated Islam in India with the help of the sword and destroyed the cultural wealth of India.

रोपेया तऽ शेख ना तऽ जोलहा । (*If there is money in the wallet, then he is a sheikh, otherwise he is a weaver.*)

*Jolaha* is the lowest in the hierarchy of the caste system among Indian Muslims. Traditionally their profession has been weaving and manual labour. This community is one of the poorest communities in Bihar. The above proverb is used not specifically for *Julaha* but for anyone who is poor irrespective of caste and religion. Like many other previous proverbs, it tries to link poverty to a caste. In other words, the proverb tries to link the stigma of poverty to *Julaha* here.

जोलहा के बेगरिहा पैठान । (*Weaver's forced labour is Pathan!*)

As has been mentioned in the analysis of the previous proverb, *Julahas* are mostly poor and they work/worked as labourers too. The caste system in India had the concept of bonded labour too. It is a system in which the borrowers were forced to repay their loans through labour by the lenders who were primarily the upper caste landlords. Moreover, these loans often take a large amount of time to repay since the interest rates were/are too high consequently propagating a cycle of generational inequality (Acharya, 2019, p. 126-38). However, it was legally abolished in 1976 by the government of India but remains prevalent sporadically due to weak enforcement. The proverb is almost always used metaphorically to communicate the contradictory or opposite behaviour of someone in a context. Like the previous proverb, it too tries to label *Julaha* as labourers and poor. A few proverbs are given below as examples of caste-based discrimination among Indian Muslims.

तीर ना कमान, कहे कि पैठान । (*There is no arrow and bow nearby, yet he calls himself a Pathan!*)  
(*Arrogance of someone's nobility.*)

कहावेले सइयद चोरावेले छछी । ((*They*) are called Sayyid, but steal Chhu Chhi (a minor thing).)  
*Being a person of high family, doing the following work.*

जोलहा के आई-पाई, चमरा के बिहान । (*If a weaver assures to give cloth soon and a Chamar asks to make shoes on the next day, then also their words should not be believed.*)

As we have seen in the case of *Brahmin*, the upper castes too have to face offensive remarks in the proverbs which are generally used by the lower castes. For example, *Bhumihar* and *Kayasth*. ***Bhumihar*** is a farming class of *Brahmin* caste. They are mostly settled in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The people of this caste are diligent. Considering the whole country, it is only a minority. Naturally, they maintain associations among themselves. In Proverbs, *Bhumihars* are infamous for miserliness and deceit.

रहे बजावत दुन्दुभी रावन के दरबार ।  
से कलियुग में आइ के भइल जात भुइँहार ॥ (Those who used to play *Dundubhi* (a kettle-drum) in Ravana's (the antagonist of the *Ramayana*) court, those same people appeared in the form of *Bhumihar* caste in *Kaliyuga*.(an Age))

The above-mentioned proverb is used only for *Bhumihar* and it is not used in a generic metaphorical sense. The people of the *Bhumihar* caste have been considered the descendants of the people who used to play *Dundubhi* (a kettle-drum) in Ravana's court. The proverb is highly offensive since it tries to demean the people of this community by associating them with the villainous character Ravana. It has one more implicit sense. It means *Bhumihar* are not a native of India. In other words, they have come from Lanka (present-day Sri Lanka). Two more proverbs have been given below which have a similar pattern related to *Kayastha* (most of them are educated people) and *Baniya* (most of them businesspersons and tradesmen).

बजर पड़े कहवाँ, तीन कायथ जहवाँ । (*Where the thunderbolt falls, where the three Kayasthas gather.*) (*An inauspicious event happens when more than one Kayastha gathers*)

जान मारे बनियाँ, अनजान मारे ठग । (*The tradesman kills (cheats) the known customers and the thugs the unknown. The tradesman does not give the full weight.*)

### Findings and conclusions

The analysis of the proverbs reflects the deep-rooted discriminations, biases and prejudices on the basis of castes in India. These proverbs can also be used to understand the caste-based discrimination and hatred available in the past. Most of the proverbs are still in use and still, people have a habit of judging an individual on the basis of the caste one belongs to. Even highly educated people can be observed making such unscientific and illogical remarks and comments. Probably it still happens because the concept of the caste system and its biases and prejudices are deeply rooted in Indian culture and to some extent in religion, and it is acquired by children in their nurturing process and the caste hierarchy becomes part of their unconscious mind. However, because of the several measures taken by government agencies, public awareness and the spread of education, discrimination on the basis of caste has gone down significantly.

The analysis of the select proverbs suggests some common patterns among these proverbs which are discriminatory in nature. One of the common patterns that can be observed here is that these proverbs try to label the entire people of a caste with certain offensive traits. It can be observed in these proverbs that an effort has been made to link some unsocial and anti-social practices to certain castes. In some of the proverbs, it seems that a type of criminal activity is exclusive to a particular caste.

A good number of Bhojpuri proverbs are not only casteist but also sexist and racist. Proverbs have also been used as powerful hegemonic discourses of the upper caste to remain in power for centuries. The analysis suggests that the proverbs are used as tools to practice power. It can also be seen as a source to understand the power dynamics of the caste system in India, particularly about the past. Proverbs are used to sustain caste-based stereotypes and they are used as upper castes' narratives to keep implicitly exploiting the caste system for their own benefits.

If we look at the nature and characteristics of proverbs across the languages most of them are used in metaphorical senses but most of the Bhojpuri proverbs related to caste are used exclusively for the castes they address. However, some of them are used metaphorically too. More or less, the proverbs of other languages of northern India have similar caste-based discriminations.

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## Representation of Transgender in Vicks (2017) Ad Campaign

Papri Bhattacharyya<sup>1</sup>

English and Foreign Languages University, Lucknow

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### ABSTRACT

Advertising has been an integral part of the society as it not only represents the society, but is also a powerful tool that affects people's thoughts, judgements and actions. But the use of language in advertising is very different from the habitual usage of the language as a mode of communication. Its main objective is to persuade the audience and create an impact. This persuasive communication is attained by the conscious choices of the advertisers in the selections of words, syntactic structures and rhetorical devices. As a result, advertising as a form of persuasive language has become an important topic of study in linguistics as well as psychology. The paper analyses the Vicks 2017 ad campaign called *#TouchofCare* studies what is communicated through the ad and how it can be interpreted. The campaign highlights the transgender rights in India. The promotional strategies adopted by the brand attract the consumers' interest and attention through a social cause. The video advertisement is analysed using the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis by Norman Fairclough (1992). The power relations, hegemony, ideologies and their impact are analyzed through visual and audio elements as presented in the ad.

### Introduction

Over the years, advertising has strengthened its ground as a social language as well as a persuasive technique aiming not only to make the addressees buy a product, but also to “amuse, inform, misinform, worry or warn” (Cook, 1992, p. 4). Although advertisements are brief, yet they have an impact on society. It includes information about the culture in which it is produced and is indexical of the social mindset which gets influenced not only by the social ideologies but also tries to influence perception and create an effect through its message system. Because of their abundance, relatability and modes of persuasion used, the words and details used in ads are etched on people's mind as compared to novels or poems. Jingles used in ads are widely recognized and create a long-lasting impression on the receiver.

Therefore, Davidson defines advertising as “a genre of spectator/reader experience, a technique of persuasion...almost a world in its own right, with its own languages, customs and history, and one that sets the tone and pace for large parts of our lives. Advertising is a topic which both causes and reveals existing social divisions.” (Davidson, 1992, p. 3).

Advertisers try to impose their ideologies on the audience through the process of encoding their ideologies in their advertisement. Successful ‘transmission of meaning’ takes place if people are able to extract this meaning which the advertiser wants to convey. In order to

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [papri.tinni@gmail.com](mailto:papri.tinni@gmail.com)

persuade and create an impact, encoders are very particular while choosing the language, emphasizing on the emotive and conative functions of the language used. Since gender is an important part of our social structure and conditioning, it becomes an influencing factor while communicating an idea. Barkay (2013) noticed that the marketing strategies adopted by brands frequently highlights progressive ideologies prevalent in contemporary society in recent years and this re-structuring has made them relevant in a society which in itself is undergoing some fundamental social changes.

### **Methodology**

This paper is foregrounded on the suppositions of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which focuses mainly on the ideologies and innate power relations that are naturalized, accepted and implemented in discourse (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Critical Discourse Analysis takes into consideration both spoken and written text as a form of discourse. Since it analyses language used in everyday communication instead of artificially constructed texts, it is regarded as a type of social practice. Fairclough's theory of CDA is concerned with the complexity of power relations and its effect on society. Influenced by Foucault's idea of discourse, Fairclough broadens the scope of CDA, keeping the concept of power and ideology as fundamental and interconnected.

Positive Discourse Analysis (Martin & Rose, 2003) is one of the critical approaches that analyses discourse which has a positive effect on the society. It deals with the positive language and persuasive techniques used to frame a favourable image of the brand. Integrating the observations of both the critical approaches, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA) gives a comprehensive analysis of the advertisement discourse. On one hand, PDA focuses on the language expressing solidarity and understanding, promoting a positive impression of the transgender community and on the other hand, CDA helps to understand the underlying critical issues like power dynamics and ideologies that the ad attempts to highlight.

The interplay between both these methodologies also help to understand the context in which the ad is produced and the social factors that affected both the positive and critical discourse. In this paper, CDA has been used as a model to analyse the context in which the advertisement is made. The corrective role of CDA suggests how a text can be modified in order to resist the dominant ideology. The analysed advertisement is an attempt to CDA which aims to undo the harm done by the existing dominant ideology. Thus, the ad discusses existing beliefs of people and their intentional use of language is a conscious effort to change the prevailing situation in which the text is produced. So, finding linguistic features and elements of positive discourse that is used in the text legitimizes the underlying power structures in the social world, but also attempts to undo the harm through their discourse. The Vicks ad understands the societal impact that advertisements have, therefore it highlights a social issue which resonates with the target audience and perpetuates empathy for a marginalized group.

Since ideologies are reconstructed and expressed in advertising discourse both through verbal and non-verbal communication, CDA suggests that a multidisciplinary approach needs to be adopted while analysing advertising discourse.

Non- verbal communication includes semiotic messages like pictures, photographs and videos. Social Semiotic Analysis (SSA), proposed by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen

(1996) introduced “a visual code or grammar of visual design” which involves the contextual analysis of images through features like colour, visual modality, images, framing, image placement, angles, focus and close ups. Kress and van Leeuwen states that “language and visual communication can both be used to realise the ‘same’ fundamental systems of meaning that constitute our cultures, but that each does so by means of its own specific forms, and independently” (Kress & van Leeuwen , 1996, p. 19). This “multimodal analysis” helps in constructing social meanings through visual communication. It establishes a coherence between the verbal and non-verbal modes to signify certain ideologies and power interests. It also imparts an identity and value to the advertised products through the specific choice of words by the advertisers.

Social semiotic theory adopts three sub-modes of analysis, the **composition** is the methodological aspect that finds coherence between the visual features and the language. **Representational** function highlights the interaction between these verbal and visual elements to create meaning and **interaction** refers to the relation established between the viewers, the participants portrayed and the multimodal realizations.

### Analysis

The video advertisement is a part of the advertising campaign in 2017 called #TouchofCare released by the brand- Vicks. This advertisement produced by the advertising agency, Publicis Singapore is about the consequences faced by a family because of the deformed transgender rights in India.

Previously, the discriminatory laws of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code and officially not recognising transgenders as the ‘third gender’ marginalized their existence in Indian society. Later, these laws were dissolved and transgenders got legal recognition in 2014. However, incongruity still exists in operationalising these laws. Despite legal recognition, marriage and transgender adoption are topics that are still ambiguous and debatable. Moreover, society’s role is still questionable when it comes to effective implementation of transgender rights and privileges. The ad campaign was released in 2017, before the “Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill”, 2019 was passed. It has played a positive role in shaping perceptions towards this marginalized community and is an attempt towards increasing transgender visibility in India.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasized on the importance of gender equality in the Indian education system. It aims to promote gender-sensitive approaches in the educational environment so that the existing gender disparities can be resolved in the long run. So, this contemporary media’s stance towards socio-political issues supports the government’s educational policy, promoting inclusion and acceptance of the third gender.

The ad is based on the true story of Gauri Sawant, a transgender woman, who adopted an orphan girl named Gayatri and discusses trans-adoption rights in India. Her biological mother was a sex-worker who lost her life to HIV AIDS when Gayatri was only 6 years old. She was then adopted by activist Gauri Sawant, to provide her a better future. The LGBTQ+ community is denied basic human rights by the government and even by our society and in this video, Gauri Sawant represents her community. Directed by Neeraj Ghaywan, the ad received an extraordinary amount of attention from the media and the masses.

The three-and-a-half-minute long video is a monologue by Gayatri where she recounts the journey of her life while travelling to her boarding school on a bus with her mother. The bus

journey is figuratively used to represent the metaphorical journey of her life with her foster mother by her side. Like any typical teenager, she talks about the consequences of disregarding her mother's wishes. Use of the phrase "*naraaz to hone hi wali*" meaning "is going to be disappointed" expresses modality, her epistemic awareness as stating the truth. She knows her mother too well to know what her mother wants and what makes her upset. She is sure about the consequences of her decision. We came to know from the following lines that her mother wants her to be a doctor. She is so determined on making her daughter a doctor that she didn't let Gayatri stay back with her even for an extra day. Using the expression "mummy bhi na" translating to "mom I tell you" resonates with the universal nature of motherhood, a human emotion that the audience can relate to. Like any other mother, she worries about her daughter's future and prioritizes her over herself.

Gayatri continues narrating both of their biological families and their individual stories of parting from them. Her mother was eighteen years old when she was evicted from her house by her father and since then, she has lived her life on her own terms and established herself as a self-made woman. Contrary to the experiences of her mother, Gayatri has never seen her father and her biological mother used to be unwell. She recounts one incident which is etched on her memory, when some people took her mother in an ambulance and she never returned. Both Gauri and Gayatri lost their families at a young age but their circumstances were contrastingly different. Gauri's separation from her father was deliberate whereas Gayatri lost her mother to the inevitable forces of death. However, while Gauri was on her own, she adopted Gayatri and took care of her. Gayatri acknowledged the adversities that her mother faced while putting herself in her mother's condition, saying "akele rahne ka to sochne se bhi daar lagta hai" – "even the thought of living alone scares me". She would have been in a similar predicament had Gauri not fostered her.

Gayatri reminisced about her meeting with her foster mother for the first time. Her introduction, "*phir ek din mummy ai*" alludes to the classic opening lines of a fairy tale, "one fine day, mom came to my rescue". She caressed her and took Gayatri to her house. The advert then documents the beautiful mother-daughter relationship – the motherly care and compassion shown by Gauri when her daughter was ill and their daily rituals. The memories of staying awake through the night and looking after her daughter, buying gifts like a beautiful red frock for her and cooking her favourite food to cheer her up are recollections we all can relate to. It elicits childhood memories of the audience of how mothers always pamper their child. Gayatri has already spent ten years with her foster mother and she grew up to be her best friend. They share common interests like watching horror films and having their favourite lunch, "kadhi chawal" on their favourite day of the week, Sunday. Their favourite Sunday routine, as Gayatri gets a hair-oil massage from her mother, having her favourite home-cooked meal and watching a film together, emphasizing on these small moments in life shared by this mother-daughter duo highlight the conventional nature of this relationship.

Corresponding to the description of the mother mentioned in the advertisement till now, she is perceived as a strong, self-made woman, raising a child as a single mother, who is headstrong and wants the best for her children and like every other mother, takes care of her child. Initially, a major part of the ad shows only the hands of Gauri, which metaphorically refers to the 'motherly touch' or the 'Touch of Care'. This stereotypical image of a cisgender, heterosexual woman is shattered by the revelation of Gauri Sawant's identity as a transgender woman in Shot 32. But the ideological constraints about the transgender community prevailing in

the society has not affected Gayatri's perception of her mother, as she adores her saying, "*hai na pyari*"- "isn't she lovely?". Being raised by a transgender woman, she is sensible enough to understand the hardships faced by the transgender community in India, but her mother has always tried to protect her from these social adversities. She raises an important question for the audience to contemplate, "*civics book me to likha hai ki sabke lie basic rights same hote hai, phir mummy ko kyu nahi hai?*" - "Civics book says that everyone is entitled to basic rights, then why is my mom denied them?". That's why she wants to be a lawyer instead of a doctor so that she can fight for her mother's rights. The ad influences the audience to empathize with Gauri and her daughter. Through their extraordinary story of care and compassion, they become the voice of the community and other similar stories that we are not aware of.

The ad can be subdivided into five sections- the introduction(Shot 1-2), the second part (Shot 3-7) is about the mother's wishes about her daughter's future, in the third part (Shot 8- 18) Gayatri talks about both of their previous families and how they parted from them, the fourth part (Shot 19- 31) describes how she met her foster mother, Gauri Sawant and their life together as a happy family and the last part (Shot 32- 43) reveals the identity of her mother and talks about transgender inequality.

This advertisement tried to create a perception of the social world through the use of both visual and verbal communication. In India, a lot of parents want their kids to become doctors. Even Gauri conforms to this conventional belief system of positioning the medical profession at the highest position of status and respect. So, even Gauri here is in a position of dominance, influencing her daughter. However, Gayatri shows resistance to this widespread ideology. Her mother's urgency to send her back to the boarding house can be because of a number of reasons. It might be because of her mother's concern about her future or because she wants to keep her daughter away from the way of life that the society has imposed on her so that Gayatri doesn't have to face the atrocities that Gauri faces. It reinforces the fact that it is difficult to keep an adopted child with a trans-mother. In the advert, their parting stories are stated consecutively as both of them lost their families pertaining to social practices which are considered taboos – transgender and prostitution. The second part of the ad, reveals the widespread attitude of the society towards these social issues. So much so that the conditions of the transgender community as a dominated group is accepted as "natural" by most of the society. This hegemony of power and popular culture leads to people accepting this inequality. Despite putting up resistance against this oppression by the transgender people, they are not supported adequately by the dominant group of heterosexuals. Even Gauri's father conforms to this dominance, choosing these ideological constraints prevalent in the society over the safety and security of his child. It showcases the pervasive attitude of society towards transgender as an 'outcast'.

Bignell (2002) states that, "photographs used in print advertisements work as a system of signs that gives form and meaning to consciousness and reality." Even in this ad, the image of a barbed wire fence shown in Shot 9 is used to reflect on the condition of this deprived group. It alludes to their separation from the conventional societal structures. It also refers to the barbed wires used in prisons, which is here used to portray the condition of transgenders who are not encouraged to come out and are forced to hide their identity- their whole life resembles that of the prisoners. Gayatri's relationship with her parents is also implied through the use of imagery. In Shot 12, when Gayatri was talking about her father, the camera focuses on a father and his daughter, buying a bunch of balloons. It mirrors a regular moment in a father-daughter relationship which Gayatri has never experienced. The image of the balloon is again seen in Shot

18 while Gayatri was recollecting her last memories with her biological mother- a single balloon flew up the sky. While Gayatri has never been with her father, her mother was the only valued relation in her life- here represented by the single balloon. However, she even lost her to death which is reflected through the balloon, let loose, flying up the sky. The ad shows an alternation of the past memories and the present and the transitions are brilliantly done using the sound of the ambulance siren (in Shot 16) and the scene of having chips (in Shot 24) which related the past incidents with the present.

The advertisement, as a whole, connects to the sociocultural practices prevalent in the society. It focuses on a sensitive topic – inaccessibility of civil rights to the transgender community and their fight for survival, against the law as well as against societal stigmas and discrimination. Through the video advert, the advertiser tried to redefine ‘family bond’. Rather than focussing on conventional family structure and blood relations, they emphasized on relationships which are based primarily on love and compassion. This reworking of the traditional perception of family is achieved by narrating an exceptional story of motherhood that goes beyond gender. The ad uses interdiscursivity by relating advertising discourse with gender discourse. Even the gender identity of Gauri is revealed much later which leads to breaking gender stereotypes of the mental image of a mother. Thus, the ad attempts to resist social power by debunking the institutionalized gender roles. Repetition of the word ‘mummy’- ‘mom’ throughout the text shows the attitude of the advertiser who attempts to normalize “motherhood beyond gender” through the use of repetitive language highlighting lexical cohesion. The emotional parting of the mother and daughter as Gayatri left for her boarding school and Gauri trying to hide her tears from her daughter is comprehended by the audience. The universality of parental love evokes empathy and relatability from the viewers. Gayatri’s expression of the emotion ‘daar’- ‘fear’ twice “*akele rahne ka to sochne se bhi daar lagta hai*” – “even the thought of living alone scares me” (Shot 7) and “*daar lagta hai, par mummy hoti hai na, to nahi lagta*”- “I do get scared, but when mom’s around, not so much” evokes the feeling of fear and loneliness experienced predominantly by the transgender community. But for Gayatri, her mother is her saviour. In the end, Gayatri vows to become a lawyer to fight for her mother’s rights and be the voice of the minorities and the dominated groups in India. It ignites hope for a better future, where Gayatri is representative of the future generation who decides to fight for equal human rights - their step towards building a better, more accepting society.

In the above discussed advertisement, the issues of the real world are conveyed through the reel world, thus engaging the audience by narrating a real-life story and using the real-life personality, Gauri Sawant to play her own part, instead of an actor. It deepens the sensitivity towards the issue and makes it more credible.

Through the use of contemporary issues and trying to break the stereotypical barriers, the campaign has tried to create a positive perception of the company while still maintaining the essence of the brand. Use of the hashtag- “Touch of Care” in the ad refers to the connotative meaning of ‘motherly care’. The phrase ‘Touch of Care’ is used as a metaphor for ‘motherhood’. The relation between Gauri and Gayatri in the ad shows that motherhood can be redefined as a ‘behaviour’ beyond biological ‘ties’. The warmth of a mother’s love is expressed through phrases like “*bahut pyar se mujhe apni god me biṭhaya*”- “she lovingly took me in her arms”, “*daar lagta hai, par mummy hoti hai na, to nahi lagta*”- “I get scared, but when mom’s around, not so much” as she holds her mother’s hand and “*unhone hamesha mera kheyal rakha hai*”- “she always took care of me”. Gauri’s motherly love and care as she caresses her daughter when she is

ill, provided her relief. Vicks compares this warmth of love with the warmth and relief that the advertised product- Vicks balm provides to its users. Vicks as a popular brand did not introduce their product separately. Instead of advertising any Vicks product, they addressed an important social issue in order to raise awareness about the transgender community and their struggles.

However, they did introduce the product in this ad through intelligent product placement- when Gayatri was ill and her mother was by her side, taking care of her, the product was used. The tagline of the campaign- “Caring for families for generation” states that although the definition of family has changed, pertaining to the changes in the society, yet the touch of care provided by the product is everlasting. “Everyone deserves the touch of care” refers to breaking of the social stigmas and promoting equality. Society needs to be more inclusive and warmer towards people. With the prevalence of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, which till then was not abolished, the ad highlights that everyone deserves to be treated with love beyond their gender and sexuality, be it Gauri, her daughter or any other person from the LGBTQ+ community. The tagline also refers to the Vicks balm which provides care irrespective of their gender or sexuality- thus promoting it as an inclusive brand who cares for everyone in the society.

### Conclusion

Ina Goel in one of her articles stated that, “Trans-adoption in *hijra* families has always been the norm, yet it was only through cases of normative child adoption that *hijra* motherhood came into being was accepted in a patriarchal and predominantly trans-exclusionary society and media. The fact that a video featuring *hijra* mother went viral on social media may be attributed to this revelation. The celebration of the video on the internet also shows a welcoming attitude towards trans-inclusive motherhood.” (Goel, 2018)

Vicks as a brand, took this bold step of not conforming to the norms and dared to break stereotypes. Their initiative was to influence ideologies in society to be more inclusive. The ad chronicles the life of Gauri, the transgender woman to create awareness about the life struggles of these people- their struggle for existence and even civil rights which cisgender people take for granted. The advertiser attempted to provide a contemporary meaning to family as it keeps evolving, thus promoting inclusivity. The ad has garnered a lot of attention and appreciation from the viewers which is indexical of the changing point of view on this subject matter.

### APPENDIX - Vicks: Generations of Care #Touchofcare 2017

Frame Time	Image Shots	On screen Text
00:23 - 01:08 (9)		<i>Athara saal ki thi jab unke father ne unhe ghar se nikal diya</i> <b>Translation:</b> She was only 18 when her father threw her out of the house

(12)		<p><i>Maine apne papa ko kabhi dekha nahi</i></p> <p><b>Translation:</b> I have never seen my father</p>
(16)		<p><i>Ek din kuch log ae aur unhe ambulance me le gaye</i></p> <p><b>Translation:</b> Some people came and took her away in an ambulance</p>
(18)		<p><i>Phir wo kabhi wapas hi nahi ayi</i></p> <p><b>Translation:</b> and she never came back</p>
01:09 - 02:13 (24)		<p><i>Mere liye dher sare chips banaye</i></p> <p><b>Translation:</b> and made lots of chips for me.</p>
02:14 - 03:37 (32)		<p><i>Ye hai meri mummy. Hai na pyari?</i></p> <p><b>Translation:</b> This is my mom. Isn't she lovely?</p>



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## The Role of Language in Shaping Educational Equity: Perspectives from Teachers and Students

*Subhas Kumar Samanta<sup>1</sup> & Mita Howladar<sup>1</sup>*  
*Jadavpur University, West Bengal*

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### ABSTRACT

Language is a critical determinant of educational equity, profoundly shaping how students learn, interact, and are supported throughout their academic journey. This study explores the significant impact of language use in the classroom on teachers' perceptions of educational equity and the challenges language barriers create for students. It reveals that teachers' expectations, often influenced by students' language proficiency, can lead to unintentional biases, resulting in unequal treatment and widening achievement gaps. Language barriers further exacerbate these challenges by hindering students' academic performance, limiting classroom participation, and affecting their social and emotional well-being. Addressing these issues requires inclusive teaching practices, fair assessments, and supportive environments to ensure all students, regardless of linguistic background, have equal opportunities to succeed. By recognizing and addressing the crucial role of language in education, we can move closer to achieving true educational equity for all students.

### Introduction

Language is not just a communication tool but a foundational element of education, profoundly influencing how students learn, interact, and engage with the world around them (Cummins, 2000; Gutiérrez, 2008). As the main vehicle for imparting knowledge, language shapes students' academic experiences, affecting their ability to access and understand educational content (Halliday, 1993; Schleppegrell, 2004). The impact of language on education extends beyond mere communication; it is intricately linked to cognitive development, where linguistic skills are essential for fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical abilities (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1996). These skills are crucial for students as they navigate the complexities of the curriculum, engage in deeper learning, and ultimately achieve academic success (Gee, 1990; Moll, 1992).

Educational equity, which is rooted in the principle of fairness, strives to ensure that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, have equal opportunities to succeed academically (Banks, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995). However, this goal is deeply interconnected with language, as linguistic diversity in classrooms can either bridge or widen gaps in educational outcomes (García & Kleifgen, 2010; Nieto, 2010). For students who speak a different language at home than the one used in instruction, language barriers often lead to challenges in accessing the curriculum, contributing to disparities in academic performance (August & Shanahan, 2006; Genesee et al.,

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: [samantasubhas500@gmail.com](mailto:samantasubhas500@gmail.com) & [howladarmita7059@gmail.com](mailto:howladarmita7059@gmail.com)

2006). These barriers can create a cycle of disadvantage, where students struggle to fully participate in classroom activities, resulting in lower academic achievement and fewer educational opportunities (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Valdés, 2001). Addressing these language-related challenges is essential for creating more inclusive and equitable learning environments, benefiting not just individual students but entire communities and societies (OECD, 2012; UNESCO, 2015).

### **Research Questions**

1. How does language use in the classroom influence teachers' perceptions of educational equity?
2. What are the impacts of language barriers on students' access to equitable educational opportunities?

### **Research Objectives**

1. To explore how language used by teachers in the classroom affects their understanding and implementation of educational equity.
2. To examine how language barriers influence students' ability to access and benefit from equitable educational opportunities.

### **Methodology**

The methodology adopts a theoretical explanation combined with a qualitative research design. The information has been gathered from various sources, including journal articles, books, and other scholarly resources.

### **Discussion**

#### **Research Question 1**

How does language use in the classroom influence teachers' perceptions of educational equity?

Language plays a crucial role in shaping how teachers perceive educational equity, serving as both a medium for instruction and a fundamental tool for communication within the classroom. Teachers often view educational equity through the lens of students' language proficiency, which significantly influences their expectations, interactions, and assessments of students.

**1. Teachers' Expectations and Biases:** Research suggests that teachers' expectations are often subconsciously influenced by the way students use language. For instance, teachers may hold lower expectations for students who are non-native speakers or those who speak in non-standard dialects. These biases, often rooted in societal stereotypes, can lead to inequitable treatment of students based on their language abilities (Bourdieu, 1991; Cummins, 2000). This unintentional bias can perpetuate educational inequities, as students who are perceived as less capable may receive less support and encouragement.

**2. Classroom Interactions and Participation:** Language proficiency heavily influences classroom dynamics, particularly in how teachers manage discussions and encourage student participation. Teachers may see students who are fluent in the dominant language as more engaged or capable, often giving them more opportunities to speak and participate. Conversely, students who struggle with the language may be unintentionally marginalized, leading to an uneven distribution of attention and resources (García & Kleifgen, 2010). Even though teachers may not consciously exclude these students, their reliance on linguistic cues can create barriers to equitable participation, reinforcing existing disparities (Delpit, 2006).

**3. Assessment and Evaluation:** The way language is used in assessments also shapes teachers' perceptions of educational equity. Standardized tests and other forms of evaluation tend to favor students who are proficient in the dominant language, leading teachers to view these students as more academically successful (Solano-Flores & Trumbull, 2003). This can result in a skewed perception of student ability, where teachers might overlook the intellectual potential of students who are less proficient in the language of instruction (Abedi, 2002).

**4. Professional Development and Awareness:** Teachers' understanding of educational equity can be significantly influenced by their awareness of language's impact in the classroom. Professional development programs that focus on linguistic diversity and equitable teaching practices can help teachers become more conscious of their own biases and develop strategies to mitigate them. This awareness is crucial for fostering more inclusive and equitable educational environments (Lucas & Villegas, 2013).

In conclusion, language use in the classroom has a profound impact on how teachers perceive and enact educational equity. These perceptions are shaped by a complex interplay of expectations, classroom interactions, assessment practices, and the level of professional awareness regarding linguistic diversity. By addressing these factors through targeted interventions, it is possible to promote more equitable educational outcomes for all students.

## Research Question 2

What are the impacts of language barriers on students' access to equitable educational opportunities?

Language barriers create significant challenges for students, making it harder for them to access fair and equal educational opportunities. These barriers affect various aspects of a student's school life, including their ability to understand lessons, participate in class, be accurately assessed, and feel socially included.

**1. Academic Understanding and Success:** When students struggle with the language used in the classroom, it can be difficult for them to fully understand what is being taught. This lack of comprehension can lead to lower academic performance, particularly in subjects like math, science, and reading, where understanding complex ideas is crucial. Research shows that students who aren't fluent in the language of instruction often fall behind their peers, not because they lack ability, but because they can't fully engage with the material (Abedi, 2002; Cummins, 2000). This can widen the achievement gap between native and non-native speakers, perpetuating inequalities in education.

**2. Participation and Interaction in Class:** Language barriers can also prevent students from fully participating in class activities and discussions. Students who struggle with the language may be hesitant to speak up, ask questions, or share their thoughts, leading to less visibility and interaction in the classroom. Teachers might then underestimate these students' abilities, further pushing them to the margins of the educational experience (García & Kleifgen, 2010). Moreover, language challenges can make it difficult for students to connect with their peers, leading to feelings of isolation and a lack of collaboration in group work (Delpit, 2006).

**3. Fairness in Testing and Evaluation:** The impact of language barriers is particularly evident in testing and evaluation. Standardized tests and other assessments are often designed with native speakers in mind, putting students who are still learning the language at a disadvantage. These students might score poorly, not because they don't understand the subject, but because they can't

fully grasp the test questions (Solano-Flores & Trumbull, 2003). This can lead to unfair evaluations of their abilities, reinforcing existing educational inequalities (Abedi, 2002).

**4. Social and Emotional Well-being:** Language barriers also take a toll on students' social and emotional well-being, which is closely linked to their success in school. Students who struggle with language may feel frustrated, anxious, or have low self-esteem because they can't keep up with their peers. This emotional stress can diminish their motivation to learn and participate in school activities (Lucas & Villegas, 2013). Additionally, language barriers can make students feel excluded, as they may find it hard to communicate effectively with teachers and classmates, leading to feelings of loneliness and marginalization (Delpit, 2006).

Language barriers deeply affect students' ability to access and benefit from educational opportunities. These challenges impact their academic understanding, classroom participation, assessment fairness, and social integration, contributing to persistent inequities in education. Addressing these barriers through inclusive teaching practices, fair assessments, and supportive environments is essential to ensuring all students have the opportunity to succeed.

## **Major Findings**

### **1. Teacher Expectations and Language**

Teachers often base their expectations on how well students speak the language used in the classroom. When students struggle with the language, teachers might unintentionally lower their expectations, which can lead to unequal treatment. This can create a cycle where students receive less support simply because they aren't as proficient in the language.

### **2. Academic Performance and Language Barriers**

Students who face language challenges often find it harder to keep up in subjects like math, science, and reading. This isn't because they lack the ability, but because language difficulties make it harder for them to fully grasp the material. As a result, these students can fall behind their peers, widening the gap in academic performance.

### **3. Classroom Participation and Social Interaction**

Language barriers can prevent students from actively participating in class discussions and activities. Those who aren't as fluent might hesitate to speak up, leading to less engagement with their peers and teachers. This lack of participation can make them feel isolated and less visible in the classroom.

### **4. Social and Emotional Well-being**

Language barriers can take a toll on students' emotional health, leading to feelings of frustration, anxiety, and low self-esteem. When students can't keep up with their peers because of language difficulties, they might lose motivation to participate in school activities, which can further widen the gap in educational equity.

## **Conclusion**

Language plays a crucial role in education, shaping how teachers view students and how students engage with their learning environment. Teachers often form expectations based on students' language abilities, sometimes leading to unconscious biases that result in unequal treatment. When students struggle with language, they may be perceived as less capable, which can manifest in lower expectations, reduced support, and fewer opportunities for participation. This is particularly challenging for non-native speakers or those who use different dialects, as they may face additional barriers to academic success. Language difficulties can make it harder for students to understand complex subjects like math, science, and reading, not because they lack

the intellectual ability, but because they struggle with the language used in instruction. This often leads to these students falling behind, widening the achievement gap. In the classroom, language proficiency also affects dynamics, with fluent students typically being more active in discussions, while those who struggle may hesitate to participate, leading to feelings of isolation and reduced motivation. The social and emotional well-being of these students is closely tied to their academic success, and language barriers can create significant hurdles in this regard. Additionally, standardized tests and assessments are often designed with native speakers in mind, putting students who face language challenges at a disadvantage. These students may perform poorly on tests, not due to a lack of understanding, but because they struggle with the language of the questions, resulting in evaluations that do not accurately reflect their true abilities. To address these issues, it is essential to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to support linguistically diverse students. This can be achieved through inclusive teaching practices, fairer assessments, and a supportive classroom environment that values linguistic diversity. By fostering an educational system that recognizes and accommodates the language needs of all students, we can help ensure that everyone has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their linguistic background, thereby moving closer to true educational equity.

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